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PRIMITIVE FOLK.

STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE ETHNOLOGY.

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BY

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PREFACE.

THE new-born science of ethnography may, I think, be considered as the psychology of the species, just as demography may stand for its physiology, and anthropology represent an enlarged sort of anatomy.

Demography and ethnology study the great facts of nutrition and reproduction, of nativity and mortality—one in the physical, the other in the moral nature of man. Demography compares statistical data, arranges them in series, finds out their agreements and their contrasts, lays bare many a modality of life heretofore unknown or ill understood. Making big figures into an instrument of mathematical exactitude, it, like the Pythagoreans, has taken for its motto, *Numero, pondere, mensurâ.* Ethnography too has its large totals—manners and customs, faiths and religions. Ages upon ages, tribes, peoples, and nations, such are the quantities with which it deals, quantities at once algebraic and concrete. A custom, adopted by millions of men and continued during thousands of years, is equal, in fine, to the myriads of individuals who have practised it. Some of these computations land us in enormous totals, rivalling those

handled with so much ease by astronomers and geologists.

We are too apt to look down scornfully from the heights of modern civilisation upon the mental processes of former times, upon the ways of feeling, acting, and thinking which characterise human aggregations anterior to our own. How often we scoff without knowing anything about them! We have fancied that the ethnology of inferior races was nothing but a medley of nonsense; and, in fact, prejudices appear doubly absurd when we do not possess the key to them. We have ended by believing that there is no intelligence but our own, no morality that does not fit in with our formulas. We have manuals of natural history which, dividing animal and vegetable species into two categories, the useful and the noxious, affirm that neither reason nor conscience exists except amongst men; books which reproach the ass for his stupidity, the shark for his greed, and the tiger for his fierceness. But who are we that we should take up such a lofty position with regard to the intellectual and moral weaknesses of those who have preceded us? There is a lesson to be learnt, if we take the pains to look for it, in these errors through which the human race has passed, these illusions which it has left behind. They are no mere anomalies, sports of chance launched forth into empty space; they have been produced by natural causes, in natural, and we may say, logical order. In their time they were beliefs which appeared very well founded. They were a result of the disproportion between the immensity of the world and the insignificance of our personality, and they gave evidence of persevering effort, they

betokened the evolution of our organism and its adaptation to its surroundings, an adaptation which is always imperfect, always being improved. The whole series of superstitions is but the search for truth amidst ignorance. Spectacles, telescopes, microscopes, spectral analysis are but so many corrections of the ascertained inadequacy of our visual apparatus. There can be no exact comprehension of reality, except through a reasoned knowledge of previous errors; this is the price that must be paid for a science of intellectual optics.

Our institutions also are not the product of spontaneous generation. They are derived from the human soul, which never ceases to fashion and modify them after its own image. Each one of us toils at this work during his day and generation until his breath ceases. The dust that we have quickened retains our memory as long as the stream retains the reflection of its banks. Our whole being seems swallowed in forgetfulness. And yet we ourselves survive in all that subsists of the influence, oftenest the unconscious influence, we have exercised in the preservation and transformation of our surroundings. The passions that have thrilled us, our hopes and fears, our struggles, our victories, our defeats, all have left their faint and shadowy traces. The accumulation of such traces, indefinitely repeated by multitudes of our fellow-men from age to age, constitutes laws and codes, religions and dogmas, arts and sciences, and, finally, the different types of society. We are not less active than the infusoria, whose remains harden into concreted rocks and are piled up in mountainous masses. From this point of view ethnology has its resemblance with palæontology. Already in the last century it was

distinctly stated by De Brosses, "The only way to really understand what took place amongst the nations of antiquity is to know what is taking place amongst modern nations, and to ascertain if something of the same sort is not happening somewhere under our own eyes." It is a deep saying often repeated, "To travel over space is also to travel over time!" And indeed certain unexplained rites, certain customs the meaning of which has never been suspected even by those who practise them, are in their own way as interesting as it would be to an archæologist to unearth a lacustrine city, or to a zoologist to discover a pterodactyl dabbling in an Australian marsh.

Intelligence everywhere is the same thing, but its developments are successive; slowly, step by step, humanity gravitates towards reason. Sooner or later it will be acknowledged that ideas bear the stamp of their own age, that feelings vary in form and in degree. Future science will classify conceptions, even the most whimsical, will state how preposterous fancies have taken shape, will put a date upon prejudices and superstitions as upon a sort of fossils.

Such has been the leading thought in this book. Let me now explain the method followed and the means employed.

The task set before me was to trace faithful portraits, neither caricatured nor embellished. And yet I am forced to recognise that they leave a somewhat more favourable impression than would result from daily companionship with the originals. It could scarcely be otherwise.

The civilised are always repelled at first by the uncivilised. Prejudice is very unfavourable to

savages. The objects who exhibit themselves in this character at our fairs strive to represent the vulgar and therefore official type. To express themselves in "the heathen tongue," they spit, cough, or sneeze forth some hoarse or squeaking noises, and they utter nothing but nonsense or scurrility. Their dances are uncouth, grotesque contortions. For their food they tear a rabbit to pieces, or take bites out of a live fowl. No traveller will ever meet such Aunt Sallys and Jacks-in-the-box. As the investigator learns the languages of nations, as he enters into their ideas and ways of feeling, he ceases to be a stranger amongst strangers. He sees the countenances of these tattooed and naked, or half-naked, men light up, their dark skins seem more pleasing, and at length he discovers that the less he knew of them the more savage the savages seemed; his repugnance was the outcome of his ignorance. In the last century, the inhabitants of even the same island were so ill acquainted with one another that many London shopkeepers regarded the mountaineers of Scotland as brigands and cannibals.

I have made mention now and again of many absurd and barbarous practices, but I have not laid stress upon them, because foolishness is exceedingly tedious, and cruelty soon provokes disgust. Without having any optimistic prejudices, I thought it would be preferable to dwell at length upon manifestations of dawning intelligence, and endeavours after a higher morality. Consider a great, conscientious historian such as Michelet. When he is describing a people, he insists less upon what is mean than upon what is lofty in their achievements; he judges them by their noble aspirations, and not by the irksome

doings of their everyday life. It is certain that amongst mankind, as amongst plants and the lower animals, the best developed individuals represent their species more exactly than do any others; they show what it is or might be capable of in its ulterior developments. But this is a question which has already been decided. What is the rule in all exhibitions, especially in exhibitions of arts and industries? "Admit none but the best models and the finest specimens."

Let us go further. These primitive men are children, with the intelligence of a child. Now the distance between child and adult is reckoned in years; even the degrees between brute and man can be measured. Infantile intelligence is not inferior in every way to adult reason. How often fathers and mothers admire the artlessness of early childhood, its original ideas, the baffling depth of its caprices, the freshness of its sensations, its sunny, uncertain, careless charm! Nascent peoples also have sudden illuminations, inspirations of genius, heroic conceptions, inventive faculties, long lost by nations in the flower of their age. And what of those in their decline? What of Byzantine civilisations? See this palsied head, these tottering steps, these crutches; rule, tradition, convention, they have no desire beyond these. So much the worse for him who no longer understands youth, who disdains to look upon the dawn of intellectual day!

The child was all spring-time, was all hope. Has the man kept his early promise? Of all that he might have been, what has he in reality become? The smallest part. And yet he has had no bad intentions, and oftenest it has not been his fault.

Who would reproach a tree that all its flowers have not ripened into fruit? The natural inclination of the very faculties themselves drives them towards specialisation; the incessant progress of division of labour ever tends to pen the worker into a narrower corner; the exigencies of production, the cruel necessities of life, fit the proletarian into the end of a crank, reduce him to one single function, hypertrophy one limb and atrophy the other, sharpen one faculty and weaken the whole being. Indeed I do not hesitate to affirm that in many so-called savage tribes the average individual is neither morally nor intellectually inferior to the average individual in our so-called civilised states. Not that I would resume the thesis of Jean-Jacques and exalt the "child of nature" that I may the better depreciate the man who is a product of cultivation. We love and admire the child without thereby declaring him the superior of the adult. Never will instinct—sagacious, ingenious, ready-witted though it be—attain a vast and luminous comprehension of what has been surely and silently elaborated by reason. Poetry itself cannot rise to the sublimity of science; be it finch or nightingale, it cannot soar to regions where the towering eagle floats upon the might of his outspread wings.

These studies are drawn, for the most part, from the information given by travellers and missionaries during the first half of the century, about countries and tribes of which the social condition has since been deeply modified. The influx of traders and manufacturers tends irresistibly to overflow, and to invade shores which even yesterday were unknown. I shall, however, speak in the present tense, that

I may follow my authors, and that I may avoid fine-drawn reservations. Suppose I had my doubts about the actual existence of some fact which, according to the latest accounts, was a flourishing reality. Would it be desirable to substitute my probabilities and possibilities for precise observations? I had to decide one way or the other, and I beg my readers to do the same. As a general rule, these peoples have only been described by their conquerors and by those who could least understand them. A glimpse at the moment of their disappearance is all that has been caught of some, such as the kingdom of the Incas and the empire of Montezuma. Others again have been like the snow-flake during a thaw, which disintegrates and vanishes before the eye can perceive its geometrical form. Scarcely any primitive folk are now in existence; soon there will be none.

It has not been my wish to draw a full-length portrait of each of our ethnic individualities; that would have required many volumes and endless repetitions. I have preferred to give only succinct information, save that I have developed in more detail a custom here, an institution there. Hunters, fishers, herdsmen, rudimentary agriculturists; strange marriages, initiations, magical arts. If the public receive this first series of studies favourably, it will not be long before I offer them a second.

E. R.

PRIMITIVE FOLK

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CHAPTER I.

THE EASTERN INOITS.—HYPERBOREAN HUNTERS AND FISHERS.

THE *Ultima Thule*, the northernmost point that can be inhabited throughout the year, is the village of Etah, on the edge of Smith Sound, Baffin's Bay, at about 78° north latitude, and 79° west longitude, from the meridian of Greenwich. The Etayans are the first of men, or the last, as one chooses to take it. In their hunting expeditions they range as far as the southern extremity of the Humboldt glacier, somewhat beyond the 79th degree, while at the 80th the line of perpetual snow sinks lower than the hills, and even to the sea-level itself. At this point all vegetation disappears, and only an occasional shelter is to be seen—a mere summer encampment visited at rare intervals. Fielden, one of the heroic Markham expedition, which had the honour of planting its flag 460 miles from the North Pole, considers that the natives have never passed Union Cape. The coast, even in July and August, would be too barren to furnish a handful of wandering Esquimaux with subsistence. As for winter residence, it is out of the question.[1] The most northerly point where any evidences of habitation

[1] A. H. Markham, *The Frozen Sea of the Pole*.

have been discovered is Cape Beechey, at latitude 81° 54′ north. The naturalist of the Markham expedition there collected the body of a large sledge, a steatite lamp, and a snow scraper made of walrus tooth—relics probably of some expedition. Doubtless none of our fellow-creatures have dwelt beyond this parallel. The Inoits carry their excursions no further.[1]

So early as 1607 Hudson penetrated, with his sailing vessel, very nearly to the 82nd degree. In 1827 Parry, also in a sailing ship, touched latitude 82° 45′. With a steamer Nares only reached 82° 16′, and with a sledge 83° 20′. It is astonishing that modern explorers, armed with all the resources of science and industry, have scarcely outdone the early navigators.[2]

So great was the distance separating our temperate climes from these regions of frost, that though we at once recognised the Esquimaux as fellow-men, they took us for ghosts. During the long ages in which they had peopled these snowy plains they had probably believed themselves the sole inhabitants of the world, excepting a few Indians; they had never even heard of the existence of Europeans. In 1818, when Ross's ship touched at these latitudes, the worthy Etayans imagined that they were invaded by phantoms; a very natural illusion, shared by other savages, notably the Australians, on a like occasion. This ship with her white sails appearing upon the horizon, just where the depths of sky melt into the abysses of ocean, what could she be but a winged monster descending from the empyrean? And what could the fantastic beings borne upon her back and in her belly be but ghosts—ghosts on a visit? Did not the sorcerers teach that the dead inhabit the moon, where they have wood in abundance, and all things good to eat? The first Inoits, or Esquimaux, who came on board, felt the deck, masts, boats, oars, everything they came near, and, filled with amazement, whispered to one another with

[1] Nares, *Voyage to the Polar Sea.* [2] Tyson.

airs of mystery, "How much wood there is in the moon, how very much!"[1]

After Ross appeared the *Nordstern*, sent in search of Franklin; then in 1853-5 Kane; and six years later Hayes. This furthest outpost of the globe has been less isolated since steamers have been employed in the whale fishery. From time to time a band of Esquimaux comes down to Cape York and meets some of the crews. A system of exchange has grown up even in these latitudes. Hardware and other articles are given for oil and the skins of bears and seals. It is stated that from time immemorial the Indians have carried on, by means of barter, some petty commerce with the Hyperboreans.[2]

In the autumn of 1873 part of the German scientific expedition was driven back into Smith's Sound, and wintered amongst the Etayans, not leaving them till the following summer. Mr. Bessels, who took part in this expedition, had ample leisure to study closely a population hitherto almost unknown, and did not fail to take advantage of the fortunate opportunity.

We only regret that his account is so brief. Nevertheless we take it as our main authority, and Etah as our head-quarters. We shall fill in the framework with information from various sources about the other Polar Inoits, and we shall also dwell upon the Aleutians of the western extremity of the American continent. In this way it will become possible to form a tolerably complete idea of the Esquimaux race; after the manner of a botanist, who, having to describe a species containing a multitude of ill-distinguished varieties, picks out a couple of the most dissimilar, disregarding such as are merely intermediate.

The arctic landscape is everywhere like—the arctic landscape. The terrible sublimity of this

"Gulf of barren shade and spectral gleams,"[3]

[1] Ross, *Relation*, etc. [2] Bancroft, *Native Races*, etc.
[3] Leconte de Lisle, *Poèmes Barbares*.

must be seen to be described. We borrow the following from several travellers, amongst them the spirited Petitot :—

"Mountains of ice, plains of ice, islands of ice. A six months' day; a six months' night of fear and silence. A colourless sky where the frost needles drive hurtling through the air before the breath of the north wind; piles of savage rock where no grass grows; crystal castles that rise and crumble with a report as of the crack of doom; a thick fog now descending like a pall, now vanishing to reveal horrid depths to the terrified gaze.

"During this unique day the ice sparkles in the sunlight with blinding radiance. The warm beams cause it to split and sunder; the mountains crumble into ruins; the plains crack and break up into floes, which clash together with a sinister sound, accompanied by unexpected detonations.

"Night, endless night, succeeds to this enervating day. The traveller can vaguely distinguish huge phantoms gliding slowly through the gloom. In the utter isolation that invariably accompanies darkness, his energy, and even his reason, are shrewdly tested. Sunlight is at any rate life. But in the night these gloomy wastes seem a portion of chaos; unfathomable abysses lie beneath the feet, precipices tower on every side, the long shrieks of the ice strike terror to the heart.

"And now appears the blood-red phantasmagoria of the aurora borealis. A wide-spread glow illumines the black sky; a vivid arch stands out upon a background of fire; it bursts forth into rays, into a thousand sheaves of flame. It seems like a battle of gleaming darts, blue and red, green and violet—darts that rise and fall, rival one another in velocity, mingle in confusion, grow pale. And then, like the last effect of a transformation scene, a gorgeous canopy, 'the crown,' spreads above all this magnificence, and thereupon the rays whiten, the colours fade, melt into air, vanish away."

"The Northern Light, an aerial Proteus, takes a thousand

shapes, exhibits itself in marvellous combinations: a brilliant terrestrial crown or innumerable aigrettes, like St. Elmo's fires playing round the top of a mast; zones of gold whimsically entwined; livid serpents, with metallic gleams, gliding silently through the depths of space; concentric rainbows; shining and diaphanous cupolas, illuminating the sky or sifting the starlight; dismal, ensanguined clouds; long, white polar belts, stretching from one end of the horizon to the other; faint, uncertain nebulæ, hanging like a gauze veil."

Other phenomena, other pictures, no less strange:

"Now it is the radiant parhelion, in segments or equipolar, oftenest with two or three false suns, sometimes with four, eight, or even sixteen luminous spectra, all becoming centres for as many circumferences. At times horizontal, it surrounds the spectator with a multitude of solar images, transports him, as it were, beneath a dome illuminated by Venetian lamps. . . . A moon that knows no setting changes the long nights of the winter solstice into day, and is multiplied by the paraselene until four or eight moons appear above the horizon.

"Long nights, so calm and still that the beating of the heart becomes audible; nights lovely with the strange brilliance of the lights playing across the frozen snow; crystal pyramids, dazzling lustres, prisms, rainbow-tinted gems, alabaster columns, stalactites that seem of sugar or glass intermingled with braids and festoons of spotless lace; arcades, bell-turrets, pendants, pinnacles; an architecture of ice and snow, of carbuncles and precious stones, caressed by the mysterious moonbeams; a land of fays and of visions.

"The vapour exhaled condenses into frozen nodules that clash together in the dense air with a curious noise like the snapping of twigs, the whistling of a switch, or the tearing of thick paper. From time to time a sudden flash of lightning, followed by no report, marks the end of an

aurora borealis, a magnetic storm whose centre is hidden from view. A roar like thunder is a signal that a lake is near, where springs are causing an expansion of the ice.

"Do you hear that conversation? Do you perceive that tinkling of dog-bells, those reverberating cracks of a whip? You think that these noises are resounding near at hand, but minutes will pass into hours before the persons who caused them come into sight; they are separated from you by several miles. And yet a gun fired at your elbow disturbs the atmosphere no more than the cracking of a nut. . . .

"And now it is the mirage with its phantom shores, its inverted mountains, its walking trees, its hills pursuing one another, its distortion of the landscape, its kaleidoscopic phantasmagoria of seeming birches overhanging verdant lawns. . . . Columns of smoke rise in the fog, presenting the illusion of an encampment. And at sea tree-trunks, come none knows whence, are ignited by the violent friction of the ice."

Cold everywhere. This is how one of the unhappy crew of the *Jeannette* speaks of it:—

"At length winter came upon us in all its severity. The thermometer fell to 52° C. Our shelter disappeared beneath fourteen feet of snow. Merciless winds, charged with stinging hail, obliged us day and night to pour coal and oil into the two stoves, that preserved a little warmth in our blood.

"I put some mercury to freeze and beat it out on the anvil. Our frozen brandy looked like a block of topaz. We divided our meat, oil, and bread with a hatchet. Joshua forgot to put on his right glove. In a moment his hand was frozen. The poor devil wished to thaw his lifeless fingers in warm water. It was immediately covered with pieces of ice. The doctor was forced to cut our unlucky mate's hand off, and he succumbed the next day.

"Towards the middle of January a caravan of Esquimaux

came to ask us for some dried fish and brandy. We added a little tobacco to these presents, which were received with tears of joy. The chief, a feeble old man, told us that the month before he had eaten his wife and two sons."

Another traveller looks at the bright side:—

"This cold, more terrible than the white wolf and grizzly bear; this cold, that seizes its victims unawares, instantaneously, fatally; this cold quickens and purifies the blood, revives the strength, sharpens the appetite, favours the operations of the stomach, and makes it better than any of the best hot-air stoves. It soothes pain and stops hæmorrhage. If it smites us, it is by lulling us to sleep; by sending death in the midst of our dreams. This intense cold, so dry, so pure, checks putrefaction, destroys miasma, sweetens the air by increasing its density; it purifies fresh water, and distils the waters of the ocean so that they become drinkable; it transforms milk, wine, and spirits into portable crystals; it takes the place of salt in meat; it does instead of cooking for fruit, turning it into an economical and lasting preserve; it makes raw meat and tallow eatable; it dries up swamps and shallows, stops the course of diseases, reveals the reindeer's presence to the hunter by surrounding it with mist. Silk, wool, feathers stick to the fingers as if coated with glue; shavings stick to the plane. One's dishevelled locks stand on end beneath the comb, and crackle as they wave. One cannot put on one's furs or cover oneself with an ordinary blanket without causing crackling sparks to fly from skins, wool, and even one's own hands and body."

Many maintain that the Inoit race is the most backward, the most bestial of our species. But this distinction has been generously accorded to so many hordes, tribes, and nationalities, that it has ceased to have any importance; it is nothing more than a rhetorical figure—only another way of saying that these people are little known. Each traveller

represents the savages whom he has observed as brutes and ignoramuses. Taking himself as a criterion for the whole of humanity, he finds no expression too strong to mark their distance from himself.

However this may be, there is no more curious race than the Inoits. No race is less mixed, more homogeneous and distinct in its characteristics. Yet it spreads for some 3000 to 3800 miles over a territory extending across from a third to a half of the circumference of the globe, at 67° 30′ of latitude. So early as 1849 Morton[1] held the Esquimaux and other polar races to be of one family, the Mongolo-American, to which belong Greenland, with its millions of snow-covered acres, far-stretching Labrador, and the vast medley of islands and peninsulas known under the names of the Lands of Baffin, Melville, Boothia, Victoria, Wollaston, Banks, Parry, and Prince Albert, and further, all the north-western extremity of the American continent, together with the Aleutian Archipelago. Allied with them in various degrees are the Thlinkets,[2] Koloshes,[3] Kuskowins, Haidas, Ahts, and other tribes of the littoral from Alaska and Queen Charlotte to Vancouver—tribes more and more Indianised as they spread southward. Rink, Dallas, and Friedrich Müller do not hesitate to confer on the Esquimaux race the long shores inhabited by Tchuktches, Korjaks, and Tschukajires, even though they be mingled with Asiatic hordes. In short, no one will dispute the opinion of Latham:—

"The Esquimaux occupy a geographical position of exceptional importance. The solution of ethnological problems of the highest order depends upon their more or less marked affinity with several other human families."

Nor that of Topinard:—[4]

"The peoples of Asia have been so extraordinarily tossed about from east to west, from west to east, that the

[1] *Crania Americana.*
[2] Or Klingits.
[3] Or Koljoutches.
[4] *Anthropologie.*

most characteristic race must be sought beyond the Pacific in the Polar Seas."

Whatever our opinion be of the problems relating to the origin and kinship of men, it is certain that the Esquimaux are in great part a product of their climate; for environment implies appropriate food, lodging, and modes of life.

It is easy to exaggerate the superficial area occupied by these Hyperboreans, as they are often called, unless we bear in mind that their habitat is but a frontage, a ribbon of sea-board, from twelve to eighteen miles in width, extending inland for from forty-five to fifty miles only along the banks of certain rivers, such as the Youkon or the Mackenzie, where it does not pass salt-water mark. On this account Mr. Dall proposed to bestow the name *Orarians*[1] upon the whole Inoit lineage. In the forests beyond this narrow border begin the Red-skins, their mortal foes, who wage a war of extermination with them. Learned anthropologists have tried to explain this animosity by "the difference of blood."[2] If the Indians are to be believed, their hatred springs from another source. They do not know how to forgive the Esquimaux the crime of eating raw fish. Hence the Abenaki name, *Eski-Mantik*,[3] and the Ajibewa appellation, *Ayèskimeou*—titles at first applied to the Labradorians, and gradually extended to the whole of the Hyperborean tribes. It seems to us more logical to attribute this enmity, which at times assumes a religious aspect, to a cause always real, always sufficient, namely, the struggle for existence. Both dispute the prey devoured by both, living or raw. The Indian is not exclusively a hunter. He does not deny himself the delights of salmon-spearing; while the Inoits on their side know how to track the bear, deer, and grouse. In Alaska

[1] From *Ora*, a bank. [2] Von Klutschak.

[3] Charlevoix first drew attention to this derivation in his *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*; other names are *Hoshys* and *Suskimos*.

they distinguish themselves, according to the life they prefer, as "people of the earth," and "people of the boats."

Shut away from the rest of the world by their barriers of ice, the Esquimaux, more than any other people, have remained outside foreign influences, outside the civilisation whose contact shatters and transforms. They have been readily perceived by prehistoric science to offer an intermediate type between man as he is and man as he was in bygone ages. When first visited, they were in the very midst of the stone and bone epoch,[1] just as were the Guanches when they were discovered; their iron and steel are recent, almost contemporary importations. The lives of Europeans of the glacial period cannot have been very different from those led amongst their snow-fields by the Inoits of to-day. As men are now living in Greenland and Labrador, they lived formerly at Thayingen, at Schussenried, at La Vézère. The Troglodytes of the Eyzies have emigrated to the neighbourhood of Hudson's Bay; as the ice has retreated, they, in their continual pursuit of the reindeer, have drawn nearer to the pole. Such is the opinion of Mortillet,[2] of Abbott,[3] and of Boyd Dawkins, who, in particular, consider the Esquimaux as direct descendants of the Magdalenian troglodytes. At all events, they say that if the Esquimaux tools and utensils were introduced into the caverns of the Dordogne, they could not be distinguished from those left by the aborigines.

Grote concludes from his geological studies in New Hampshire, that in the region of the White Mountains the retreat of the glaciers dates back about ten centuries, and that the ancestors of the Esquimaux took possession of the soil as the snow retreated, and with the snow the herds of

[1] Nordenskiold, *Voyage of the Vega.*
[2] *Bulletin de la Société Anthropologique,* 1883
[3] *American Naturalist,* 1877.

reindeer. This conclusion may be compared with that reached by Bessels. After careful measurements, he maintains that the Inoit type of cranium is none other than that of the *Mound Builders*, a vanished race, who formerly raised the gigantic earthworks adorned with figures that have been found in several parts of the United States.

Some writers contend that the Esquimaux once peopled Polar America with their hunting and fishing stations, and even reigned supreme in the lands which have become Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and New England; whence they were dislodged by the earliest Hurons, Iroquois, and Algonquins.

Science, when less imperfectly informed, will pronounce upon these assertions. Many scientists already deem they possess sufficient information to resolve the vexed question of the peopling of America. They affirm that the whole Western Continent, from Cape Golovnin to the Straits of Magellan, has owed its inhabitants to one and the same Esquimaux race. Certainly the Inoits and Red-skins, despite the hatred that separates them, are connected by intermediate types in the wide plains of Alaska and British Columbia. And on the Asiatic side, travellers inclined to note resemblance rather than dissimilarity, have not failed to remark that the Inoit merges by insensible gradations into the Yakout and the Samoyede.

Who does not know the Esquimaux physiognomy? The big trunk on short legs, the remarkably small extremities, the paw-like fingers, the flabby flesh; skull essentially dolichocephalous;[1] head large, cheek-bones prominent, face broad, full and chubby; hair black, long, harsh, and stiff; snub nose. A traveller pleasantly remarks that a Roman-nosed race could not hold their own in these latitudes.[2] The protuberance furnished with the olfactory

[1] It has been also called *Scaphocephalous—i.e.*, having the skull in the shape of a boat.

[2] F. W. Butler, *The Wild North Land.*

apparatus would too often be frozen and fall off; a flat nose is less exposed. The features of the face, particularly the eyes, offer a marked resemblance to those of the Chinese and Tartars.[1] The skin, tinged with dusky yellow, and covered with a layer of greasy scurf, is disagreeably cold to the touch. Winter gives it a clear, almost European tint, but in early spring it darkens and becomes smutty; maybe in consequence of peeling. Dirty as it is, this open, simple countenance leaves a favourable impression upon the traveller. The average height of the Inoits varies from four feet six to five feet seven.[2]

The title Esquimaux, or Raw-eaters, is, as we have seen, a mere nickname. They call themselves *Inoit* (or *Innuit*), a word meaning "man." For in every latitude savages appropriate that most flattering of appellations. From the Tchouktche to the Dinne, Canaque and Apache, there is not a barbarian who does not, with clear conscience and absolute conviction, arrogate to himself the quality of the man *par excellence*. Sometimes, when his neighbours have done likewise, it becomes a necessity to distinguish between "men" and "men," and special designations have been taken, such as Raven-men, Wolf-men, Fox-men.

The Koloshes, a variety of the Esquimaux race, may be counted amongst the most ingenuous of savages. They believe that they alone constitute a good half of a world, inhabited in the first place by Koloshes, and in the second by non-Koloshes. Nor did the ancient Beni-Israel recognise more than two countries upon earth, their own, the Holy Land, and all remaining habitable and uninhabitable lands, entirely profane and unclean. The Esquimaux cosmogony relates how God—He was a Greenlander named Kellak—fashioned the first man and the first woman from a clod of earth. He tried His prentice hand upon Kodliuna, the white man, but, being awkward as a beginner, He made a

[1] Lubbock, *Prehistoric Man.*

[2] Fr. Müller, *Allemeine Ethnographie.*

mess of it, and to him He gave not the seal. But on a second attempt He reached perfection and created MAN, the real man—the Inoit.

There are people at Smith Sound who are not so well informed. They seemed extremely astonished to learn that their tribe was not the only one in the world.

We have said that the Inoits are distributed over an exceedingly long and narrow strip of territory. Their encampments are from ten to twenty, sometimes as much as even ninety-three miles apart, separated by dreary wastes. They always winter at the same spot. If patriotism be a virtue, they possess it to the highest degree. Never was a landscape of verdant groves, golden harvests, and willows mirrored in the streamlet's silvery waves, better loved than these snow-fields and ice-hills, these rugged knolls and bergs, under an inclement sky. The Esquimaux is so well adapted to his surroundings that he could not do without them; he would not even know how to live elsewhere, so completely has he identified himself with the nature about him. Yet he is something of a traveller. In summer he leaves his place of abode and betakes himself to his expeditions, carrying his tent with him, or rather, he makes the dogs harnessed to his sledge carry it—dogs of a peculiar breed,[1] larger than those of the Pyrenees or of the Abruzzo. They do not bark, but howl horribly.[2] He has trained them to his service by long centuries of whipping. The dog is to the Esquimaux what the reindeer is to the Lapp and the Samoyede, the camel to the Tuareg, and the horse to the Bedouin and the Tartar—namely, the great means of locomotion, the inseparable companion, and, in case of direst necessity, the final meal.

A whole pack of dogs is harnessed to the sledge. No whip can be long enough to reach the leaders. If it be

[1] Curtis, *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. lxiv,
[2] Butler, *The Wild North Land.*

necessary to go quickly, what is to be done? The driver gives a vigorous cut to the last dog, who, being spiteful and snappish, after the manner of slaves, refuses to smart alone. Unable to turn round to bite, he revenges himself with his teeth upon the flesh nearest to him, and so from rank to rank, until in no time all have been bitten, and the sledge glides rapidly over the snow amidst growls, protestations, and howling. What could be more human? How does the chariot of the State roll upon its way?

When evening falls the king of each pack is tied up near his sledge; his subjects, male and female, surround him, lying at his feet. This submission, the result of weariness and exhaustion, is somewhat intermittent. Monarchs of the snarling tribe have plenty to do in governing their vassals; the females in particular are of an errant disposition. The males drag at the cord, growl, and show their teeth, impatient for the hour when they will be able to measure themselves against their rivals. Each gains his rank by main force. A long series of battles establishes the supremacy of the strongest and boldest, and this authority is not long respected. Any day a revolution may break out, fomented by some ambitious individual who perceives the master's energy to be diminished by age or some other cause. These dogs love tumult; fighting is the ideal of their existence. The teeth of the favourite queen are entrusted with the maintenance of discipline amongst the fair sex, and, except in cases of jealousy, she exercises her prerogative with sufficient judgment. The king mostly submits without protest when his consort assumes an angry mien.[1]

According to the authorities consulted, we are told that the Esquimaux travel but little, or that they travel a great deal. These assertions would cease to be contradictory if, instead of using general terms, the specific name of the tribe in question were mentioned. Some affirm that the Inoits have a centre of exchange between the estuaries of the Mackenzie

[1] Nares, *Voyage to the Polar Sea.*

and Copper Rivers. Others, denying that these exchanges are sufficiently brisk to deserve the name of commerce, describe the Greenlanders and Labradorians as ignorant of the existence of their brethren of Behring Straits. It would therefore seem likely that local incidents and traditional peculiarities would thoroughly differentiate these petty tribes, each perpetuating itself in its own little corner from time immemorial. It is astonishing to learn that from Greenland to Labrador, from Labrador to the Aleutian Archipelago, and from thence to the Tchouktches, customs are only distinguished from one another by insignificant details, and not by broad lines of belief and superstition; that the whole of Esquimaux Land is one huge province. Yet it is easy to understand: the inhabitants are dominated by the two greatest factors of existence, climate and food; these impose upon all alike conditions of practical equality. All feel the same needs and have recourse to the same means to supply them; they live the same life, half on land, half on water; eat of the same fish, trap the same kinds of game by the same devices, the same tricks. Under these latitudes existence is impossible save by the rigid observance of certain obligations, which, after all, are very rational; they must be accepted on pain of death, and people conform to them without a struggle. Habit is second nature.

Beyond the beings of his own species, the Inoit knows only the Great Whale, Bruin the Bear, Master Walrus, My Lord Seal, the Ancient Wolf, and those other distinguished personages, foxes, hares, otters, and sea-lions. He chases them, hunts them down, kills and eats them; but tries to make them forget this unhandsome treatment by overwhelming them with tokens of honour and reverence. Moreover, he sincerely admires them, and on many occasions takes them for a pattern. Without the seal and walrus he could not manage to exist. The first is, in addition to fish, his staple food; but on many islands and peninsulas the second is his only provision during several weeks.

When the walrus[1] stays away a frightful famine ravages the population, and if an exceptionally severe winter raises icy barriers across certain passages, as occurred in 1879-80, whole villages, down to the last man, are swept away; notably on the Isle of St. Lawrence,[2] in the waters of Alaska, half-way between the Old Continent and the New. The walrus and the seal[3] render the same services to the Inoit as the cocoa-tree to the Polynesian, and the kangaroo and xantnorrhœa (grass-tree) to the Australian. They feed and clothe him; he applies them to his person inside and out; they warm him and light him, deck his hut without and within. With the hides he constructs his boats and skiffs—*kayaks*, *umiaks*, *baidarkas;* with their intestines he manufactures his overalls; with their bones he fashions all sorts of arms and utensils; walrus ivory constitutes his principal medium of exchange.

The Esquimaux connects the seal closely with man. He has the habits, character, appearance, even the physiognomy of this animal, which like himself is amphibious. A resemblance far from surprising, for all his thoughts and desires continually tend towards this creature. He confesses that his winter house is constructed on the pattern supplied by the seal in its *igloo*. Both he and it are thick-set, all trunk, voracious, both are gay and domestic, both have great, soft, intelligent eyes. At first sight one has no great opinion of either of these awkward lumps of flesh, but it is astonishing to find how much judgment and good nature is revealed by a close observation of them. It is noteworthy that the beast is more jealous in love than his human compatriot.

"In early spring the female seals leave the sea; the males are on shore to receive them. They greet them by blowing air through their nostrils, making a horrible noise, the signal for battle. The brutes raise themselves upon their fins and enter upon a general encounter, where

[1] *Trichechus Rosmarus.* [2] Otherwise called Eivugon.
[3] *Phoca ritulina, grypus grœnlandica*, etc.

terrible wounds are inflicted by their wide jaws, which are armed with formidable teeth. The females, crouched around, look on at the combat, of which they are the prize. He who remains victor will be their mate, bearing himself with dignity and exercising absolute authority. His dominion, however, is subject to invasion; the frontiers are often crossed by small detachments; the males at first discarded prowl round the neighbourhood, making signals, of which some light-minded females take advantage whilst the lord and master is otherwise occupied. If he perceives this by-play he growls furiously, rushes at his rival, and if he cannot reach him, falls upon the faithless one, leaving her some poignant cause for remorse. Nevertheless his domination rarely lasts long; one of the vanquished re-enters the lists and ousts him in turn."[1]

The polar bear[2] also is an animal of original character. Apparently awkward, and yet so dexterous in all he attempts; with the head of a shrewd and wily fox upon his great misshapen body, his thick fur is a bag of mischief. His meat is delicate when fresh, but extremely indigestible, so that, hunger permitting, it is hung for some time; as for his liver, it is reputed a dangerous poison, and is therefore eagerly sought after by sorcerers. The Inoits recognise Bruin as their master in seal-hunting, and tell wonders of his ready wit. On the top of a rock, whither he has clambered unseen, he lies in wait for the walruses and sea-calves gambolling on the beach. When one comes within range, he breaks its head with a big stone or a skilfully aimed block of ice.[3] Bruin *talks sealish*, flatters and fascinates the poor beast, that, however, ought to know him of old. He lulls it to sleep by an incantation, of which the Inoits have learned the secret, and which they repeat as exactly as they possibly can. It may be thought

[1] Malte-Brun, *Nouvelles Annales des Voyages*, 1855.
[2] *Ursus maritimus. Thalassarctos polaris.*
[3] *Nature*, 1883. J. Rae.

that we exaggerate. Let us quote an eye-witness, the veracious Hall:—

"Coudjissi *talked sealish.* Lying on his side, he worked himself along by a succession of wriggles and hops. Directly the seal raised his head, Coudjissi stopped his progression and pawed the ground with his hands and feet, talking away all the time. And then the seal would raise himself a little and with quivering fins roll on his back and side in an ecstasy, afterwards letting his head drop as if to sleep. And Coudjissi would work himself along again, creeping on until the seal once more raised his head. This manœuvre was repeated several times. But Coudjissi approached too quickly, the charm was broken, the seal plunged, and was seen no more. 'I—ie—oue!' exclaimed the disappointed hunter; 'ah, if we could talk as well as the bear!'"[1]

If the seal and the bear could but believe what is said and sung to them, taking, killing, skinning, and eating would be nothing but minor details, necessary formalities, to afford the Inoits an opportunity to approach and present their sincere and respectful homage. Nevertheless, a hunter who has struck a mortal blow generally remains within his hut for one or several days, according to the importance of the slain animal. He fears his victim's resentment. As, however, terms can always be made with the powers of the other world, he will permit himself, if time presses and the chase looks promising, to run up an account for penances incurred, and perform all his expiations at once or in succession during some more convenient week. Meanwhile, the bear's bladder will be hoisted up to the top of the poles supporting the *igloo*, and in this receptacle the hunter will place his best spear and harpoon heads. If the beast was a female bear, the bladder will also contain the wife's glass beads and necklaces and her copper jewels. The packet will not be taken down for three days and three nights. This is a rudimentary sort of magic; for, as the bladder

[1] Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux.*

is in Esquimaux estimation the seat of life, it can communicate to the objects placed therein the physical, moral, and intellectual virtues of the soul that formerly inhabited it. In this connection it may be as well to remark that a bladder fastened above their celebrated boat, the *kayak*, renders it incapable of submersion, and spares the canoe innumerable upsets. Let us add that the thongs attached to harpoons are always provided with an inflated bladder, which causes the whole to float when the animal plunges beneath the water on receiving a wound.

I do not mean to imply that Inoit dogma makes the bladder the sole receptacle of the spirit. The liver, "the immortal liver," to borrow an expression from Virgil, is also a seat of destiny. The hunter who has just slain a seal may make over his luck to a comrade returning empty-handed, if he entrusts the liver to a sorcerer, who on the spot passes it to the unlucky one; the unlucky one will slowly masticate it, slowly swallow it, and will be at once another man.[1]

Solemn compliments are addressed to the first herring who allows himself to be caught; he is apostrophised as a great chief in his tribe, pompous titles are lavished upon him, gloves are literally and figuratively put on to handle him.[2] A woman is forbidden to touch the first seal captured; men only may approach it. When walrus hunting begins, it is not permissible to handle reindeer skins any more, or to buy them, or to make them into clothing. It would be a want of manners towards the Grand Morse, who might revenge himself by preventing the petty morses from being caught.

All humbug no doubt, but in religious matters great skill is required to distinguish between pretence and sincerity. Let us say rather, artless hypocrisy, children's lies.

Dialects amongst the Esquimaux resemble one another as closely as do countenances, customs, and costumes; the language spoken on the shores of Asia and at Behring

[1] Rink, *Eskimo Tales.* [2] Dall, *Alaska and its Resources.*

Straits differs very slightly from that of Greenland, Labrador, and Mackenzie River. Rink, a competent authority, is inclined to believe that the affinity is such that all who speak these tongues understand, or might understand, one another.

Generations pass without bringing appreciable change; and, what is more, popular tales are transmitted literally from age to age, and versions, collected in localities a hundred miles apart, differ less than if the same person amongst ourselves had repeated them at various times. Inoit is not wanting in euphony, and on some lips takes even a musical intonation. It is constructed on the same polysynthetic method as the American languages. One or several sentences can be concentrated in one word—a long-winded one. Hall quotes *Piniagassakardluarungnaerângat* as rather a long word, but it has only thirty letters, and there are some with fifty. Rink translates the expression, *Igdlor-ssua-tsia-lior-fi-gssa-liar-ku-gamink*, by "Whereas he ordered him to go to the spot where the large house was to be built."

Theoretically the principal word may have any amount of affixes joined to it, but there are seldom more than a dozen, and they are grouped as far as possible in logical order.

The Inoits have adopted the most natural and universal system of numeration, that of counting by the fingers. The four members are called "a man." To say eight they show a hand and three fingers; for twenty-four, a man and four fingers; for thirty-five, a man and three members; for eighty, four men.

The huts or *igloos* exhibit marked differences, and vary according to the materials used. Frequently there is a summer and a winter house; the latter erected with special care, for from thirty to fifty degrees of cold are not uncommon. The cellar house is a very favourite type. The walls are sunk in the ground as far as the roof, or very nearly so; the roof itself is covered with a layer of

turf. This burrow is entered by the chimney. Wood, if there be any, is economised as much as possible, and is only used for framework, uprights, and the space between the rafters. For other purposes various materials are substituted, such as slates, bears' ribs, whales' vertebræ, walrus' tusks; the place of bricks and boarding is filled by skins stretched along the walls.

Here is the description given by Hayes of a northern palace, the most sumptuous building in all Esquimaux land:—

"The house of the Danish Governor of Upernavik, constructed in the same style as those in the village, and indeed all the native dwellings in Greenland, is relatively large and comfortable. The vestibule, not so long as in ordinary huts, does not serve as a kennel for dogs of all ages, as the proprietor is rich enough to afford these members of an Esquimaux household the luxury of a separate abode. This corridor is four feet instead of three in height, and there is less risk of knocking one's head as one comes in. The roof, the floor, the walls are all covered with boards brought from the Danish warehouses. Common huts measure only twelve feet in height by only ten in breadth. The Governor's house has, like them, only one room, but it is twenty feet by sixteen. The walls, six feet high and four thick, are, as everywhere else, constructed of stones and turf. The roof is composed of boards and ill-squared joists. The whole is covered with turf. Fifty feet off the cabin looks, in summer, like a green hillock, and would be indistinguishable from the grassy slope were it not for the chimney of the stove sticking out, and the smoke of Danish coal issuing therefrom. The country produces no other combustible than dry moss, which the natives impregnate with seal oil, and burn in the steatite dish, answering the purpose of both lamp and hearth. The floor is raised a foot in the middle of the room, and on this daïs we took our places with the various members of the family. Bags of

eider down were piled up at the further end. When it is time to sleep each spreads out his bed where he likes. No walls, no screens; the girls take one side of the dwelling and the boys the other."

Further north turfed huts become rarer, at least as winter habitations. The ground, almost always frozen, is too hard to dig, and hives or kilns are constructed of cubes of snow, laid one above another in diminishing rings. The Etayans arrange their blocks in spirals, placed with geometrical accuracy. A fashion apparently unique; no other example of this style of architecture being cited. John Franklin exclaims that a hut of this sort, when newly finished, is one of the most beautiful things formed by the hands of man:—

"The purity of the materials, the elegance of the construction, the softness of the light filtering through the transparent walls, unite to form a beauty unapproachable in white marble. The contemplation of one of these huts or of a Greek temple adorned by Phidias leaves the same impression; each is a triumph of art inimitable after its kind."

But when one or several families are cooped up in a narrow space, not ventilated either by door or window, amidst a manifold accumulation of herbs, rotting meat, putrifying fish, rancid oil, rubbish and waste of every description, what becomes, what can become, of cleanliness? These huts, so lovely when first finished; so pleasing with their oval shape and immaculate whiteness without, and the sweet, pale light that penetrates them within; these huts are no sooner inhabited than they become stinking cesspools, vile sinks of filth.

Though the Inoits are notoriously slovenly and dirty, they do take a vapour bath now and again; generally, however, they feel an insurmountable distaste for ablution. The results of this prejudice amongst the accumulated refuse of many active digestions can easily be divined. The filth and want of air cause the interior of these

huts to send forth an almost unbearable stench, heightened by the contributions of the skin bags and the meat, which, after hanging for several months, plays its part handsomely. Round about the hovel the earth is strewn with innumerable bones of walrus and sea-calf, mingled with malodorous rags, skulls of dogs, bears, and reindeer, and even human remains.

The furniture is in keeping with the dwelling. Ross describes the utensils and instruments as paltry in the extreme: sledges, not of wood but of bone, spears pointed with a sea-unicorn's[1] tooth, wretched knives, whose blades are encrusted with meteoric iron,[2] sometimes in the condition of ore.

"An Esquimaux, hearing a clock strike in a Danish establishment, asked if watches spoke also. He was shown a repeater.

"'Ask the time for yourself!'

"'Madam, most excellent person, would it be asking too much of your goodness to be so kind as to tell me the time?'

"The spring was touched, and 'A quarter-past three,' responded the watch.

"'Just so,' replied the worthy fellow; 'madam, I am greatly obliged to you.'"

It is a peculiarity of the Etayans that they know bows and arrows only by name, although the other Inoits are excellent archers, and some have even learnt to manage a gun with dexterity.

Another important fact is that the Etayans have no boats of any sort. How can a sea-side population, a population of fishermen, be destitute of the means of navigation possessed by their neighbours? Why have they not imitated so necessary an appliance, one of the most simple, at least in appearance, and one which they must know by sight or by hearsay?

[1] *Monodon monoceros.* [2] Pallas.

Kane confirms the above, and says that they only know of *kayaks* by tradition, though the Esquimaux are counted amongst the boldest of sailors and most expert of boatmen, and their existence is so closely connected with seafaring, that the boat is the great means of maintaining their sociological unity. In a Hyperborean village boats are counted as are hearths elsewhere; each head of a family must be a boat-owner. "If the Etayans had boats," observes Bessels, "these poor people could chase shoals of sea-unicorns, engage in profitable fisheries, and save themselves from long and cruel famines. And when they come to the end of their resources, and are reduced to the last extremity, they might do better than fasten their sledges together and launch them upon the water; a plan as dangerous as it is inconvenient." Our observer can only explain to himself this absence of boats by the hypothesis of degeneracy. This tribe must once have been better off, must have understood the art of navigation, and from one cause or another lost it again.

Such extraordinary listlessness seems unlikely amongst people who do not show themselves in other matters more stupid than their brethren and near neighbours. Without pretending to solve the difficulty, which has puzzled such acute observers as Ross and Bessels, we adopt, pending better information, the explanation suggested by Rink. "In the extreme north," he says, "the sea is too often frozen for the advantageous use of boats and *kayaks*. The Etayans, carrying the principle of the division of labour to an extreme, must have neglected fishing to devote themselves to the practice of the chase, and deemed, perhaps wrongly, that the construction and difficult navigation of *kayaks*, *baidarkas*, and *umiaks* would be mere loss of time."

The costume of the Inoits is very sensible of its kind, and even admits of elegance. Ask the officers and sailors who have had the honour of dancing with the coquettes of Greenland! At first sight the cut seems to be identical for

men and women, but the latter lengthen it tail-wise, and adorn it with a larger hood, where the mother lays her little one to nestle cosily, unless she stuffs it into one of her boots. Overalls,[1] made of the intestines of the seal, are as water-tight as our best mackintoshes, and much lighter. In certain localities the masculine sex adopts a costume of feathers, the feminine of furs; elsewhere the dress is two-fold: feathers below, fur above. The boots of the young people are quite white, and made of soft, flexible leather; those of the married are red. To indicate their tribe the men have a special manner of trimming their hair, the women of tattooing their faces.

The mother investigates the condition of her pickaninny's locks without the aid of a comb, and is rewarded for her trouble by the small game she collects. Gossips often crouch round in a circle and organise a general onslaught. Quick as monkeys, they forage in the sticky wigs, and fingers go and come from head to mouth, from mouth to head. No sooner sighted than swallowed!

Such cares are a function of primitive woman. Every lover of stories and ancient legends cannot have failed to notice how in all the great love-scenes the hero seats himself at the maiden's feet, how she then takes his head upon her lap and louses it, proceeding from endearment to endearment until, magnetised, he sinks into slumber.

The fair Esquimaux make use of a small stick ending like a spatula, to perform the office of an elongated finger; with it they scratch their backs and dig into the depths of their garments. One would say that the little instrument was copied from the ivory scratch-backs displayed by the purveyors of the fashionable world behind the magnificent plate-glass of Piccadilly, Regent Street, or the Rue Richelieu. Extremes meet. In the East, says Chardin, an ivory hand is never missing from a woman's toilet apparatus, for it would be uncleanly to scratch oneself with the fingers.

[1] *Okouschek.*

With fine weather comes abundance, and then our men have no sweeter pleasure, in the intervals of the chase, than to loiter, trifling their time away, round the huts, sleeping a good part of the day and rousing themselves only to fill their stomachs. Eating is their happiness, their keenest joy. They tell you with thorough conviction that an *inoua* or special genius has been bestowed upon them, the Demon of Appetite. The famous distinction that man eats to live, not lives to eat, would be little to their taste. At earliest dawn the mother touches her child's lips with a little snow, and then with a piece of meat, as if to say, "Eat, beloved son, eat and drink!"

When a guest is invited to their repasts, it does not do for him to be fastidious; he must fall to like one of Homer's gallant trenchermen; for the host prides himself upon satiating hunger herculean as his own; the compliment shown him is in proportion to the appetite satisfied. If the guest is positively incapable of devouring all that is set before him, politeness requires him to carry away the remainder.

Mighty eaters before the Lord, these Esquimaux. Virchow broaches the opinion that the formation of their skulls and their whole anatomy is determined by the jaw, which itself is determined by this everlasting mastication.[1]

"Three salmon were enough for ten of us; each Esquimaux ate two. . . . Each of them devoured fourteen pounds of raw salmon as a slight refreshment to enable him to enjoy the pleasure of our society. Passing my hand over their stomachs, I ascertained them to be so prodigiously distended that I should have thought no human creature could have borne it."[2]

They may be seen swallowing with disgusting avidity rotten fish and the reeking carrion of birds. They are no more squeamish than the Ygorrotes of the Philippines,[3] who pour the juice of a freshly killed buffalo's dung as sauce

[1] *Verhandlungen der Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie*, 1877.
[2] Ross, *Second Voyage*, 1829-1833.
[3] Sinibaldo de Mas.

over their raw meat. They do not shrink from the intestines of a bear, or even from his excrements, and pounce eagerly upon half-digested food taken from the stomachs of reindeer. Though the lichen is as tender as chicory, and has a slight taste of bran,[1] it is difficult to imagine this repast without a sensation of discomfort. But it is just a case of the axiom that one cannot dispute about tastes and colours. Lubbock suggests, with some appearance of truth, that the need experienced by the Inoits to season the heavy meat with which they load their stomachs by some particles of vegetable matter, explains this idiosyncrasy. Moreover, Captain Hall has tasted some, and declares that there is nothing better. The first time he partook thereof he was in the dark and in ignorance of what was in his mouth.

"It was delicious; it melted on the tongue—ambrosia with a touch of sorrel." But here is the bill of fare. "First entrée, seal's liver, raw and still warm, a piece, wrapped in fat, for each guest. Second course, cutlets of unrivalled tenderness, dripping with blood; nothing more delicious. And then, what? Entrails, divided by the hostess between her fingers, yard by yard, and dispensed in lengths of from two to three feet. They passed me by, as if I did not appreciate this delicate morsel, but I relished it as much as any of them; everything is good in a seal. I seized upon one of these ribbons, and unrolling it between my teeth, arctic fashion, cried, 'More, more.' That produced a sensation, and the old ladies were in raptures."

These epicures smack their lips over bilberries and raspberries squashed in rancid oil. They relish whale's fat, sandwiches of alternate slices of fresh and white, and black and putrid. A mince of raw liver, sprinkled with wriggling maggots, is a dish for a king. Grease that melts on the tongue is a dainty. Glasses of milk taken from the gullets of baby seals, milk white as that of the cow, perfumed as that of the cocoa-nut, these are nectar. But the joy of joys is to drink

[1] Clarke, *Voyages.*

the blood of a living animal from the vein itself, by means of an instrument invented for the purpose. When it is possible, animals are suffocated, so that none of the vital fluid with which their arteries are charged may be lost by cutting their throats. If an Inoit's nose bleeds, he sets his tongue to work directly, and even scrapes his fingers. He delights in chewing meat still pulsating with life, while the crimson juice trickles down his throat in streams of slightly acid sweetness. Salt disgusts him, perhaps because the atmosphere and the raw fish are saturated with it. Glutton and connoisseur, he appreciates quality, but always on condition that the quantity be superabundant. Let the food be cooked or uncooked, alive or putrid; but let there be plenty! In times of scarcity the Inoits devour cauldrons full of sea-weed, softened in warm water. In general, however, it is held that viands are sufficiently softened by frost and waiting. Cooking, properly so called, is admitted as an agreeable refinement when time and place allow, never as a necessity.

Belcher rates the winter provision of a station at 24 lbs. a soul (*sic*) per day; an amount given him as normal and perfectly reasonable.[1] Captain Lyons tells a striking story of an eating bout:—

"Kuillitleuk had already eaten until he was half-seas over. He was dropping asleep, with a red and burning face and open mouth. His wife was cramming him, stuffing bits of half-boiled meat down his throat with the help of her first finger, steering clear of his lips. She carefully watched the process of deglutition, and immediately filled up any void that might appear in the orifice with a stopper of raw fat. The happy man did not stir; he moved nothing but his molars, chewing slowly, and not even opening his eyes. From time to time a stifled sound escaped him, a grunt of satisfaction."[2]

[1] *Transactions of the Anthropological Institute.*

[2] Lyons, *Savage Islands.*

It is their energetic digestion that keeps the Esquimaux strong and merry in their glacial climate. Nowhere, not even at the torrid zone, is fire so little used as amid these well-nigh eternal snows. The hot-breathed Inoits, continually occupied in consuming oil and fat in their stomachs, do not care for fires of wood and coal. "They are always thirsty," says Parry. "When they visited me they always asked for water, and drank it in such quantities that it was impossible to supply them with half of what they wanted." Cold, remarks Lubbock, is more necessary than heat to the inhabitants of snow-houses, where the temperature can never rise above freezing-point without thawing the roof, making it begin to drip, and even threaten to give way and rain down upon those whom it should shelter; a serious inconvenience, which the people remedy as well as they can by stretching skins under the arch and round the walls. They are careful not to build the latter too thick, so that the outside cold may always permeate them. Bags like knacker's sacks are hung, filled with meat, round the inner walls. If this meat is to be fresh, it must remain constantly frozen, but before long it gives out a powerful and penetrating stench, that transforms the hovel into a charnel-house, uninhabitable for Europeans. Even the officers of the *Alert* looked askance in their air-tight cabin at every rise in the thermometer. Under the weight of their fur clothing they were fatigued by the heat when the external temperature rose above 15° C. below zero.[1]

Spring is said to be the most unhealthy season. It is then too warm to stay indoors and too cold to go out. In huts where every chink is carefully filled up, huts that can only be entered by underground passages, the heat generated by respiration and the combustion of oil and fat renders any other source of warmth almost unnecessary. A lamp burns in the midst of the wretched hovel, and over it the snow for drinking is put to melt. Over it too the husband

[1] A. H. Markham, *The Frozen Sea of the Pole.*

dries his boots; afterwards the shrivelled leather is softened by the wife, who bravely chews it between her powerful molars. The cooking is done at this lamp, and it illumines the long night that lasts no less than four months from sunset to sunrise.

An interesting sight, these poor people gathered round their smoky wick! All authors have traced civilisation to the invention of fire, and they have not been mistaken. Humanity, as distinguished from the beasts, was born upon the hearthstone. Fire radiates heat and light, the twofold manifestation of the same principle of movement. Without much consideration a predominance has been accorded to the action of heat, which belongs rather, as it seems to me, to the action of light. The Hyperboreans are clearly a case in point. It would appear that they, more than any men upon earth, must needs have recourse to artificial sources of heat, yet they scarcely make the attempt. But they do not dispense with light. If they did, it is hard to see how they would be really superior to the bears, their rivals, and the seals, on which they feed. We may attribute to the lamp rather than the hearth, to light rather than heat, the transformation of more or less hairy anthropoids into men.

The internal heat generated by enormous feeding produces the unexpected result of rendering the Esquimaux remarkably precocious. Puberty is reached in these arctic regions almost as soon as in tropical countries, and it is not at all rare to see little girls of ten or twelve marrying boys scarcely older. The adolescents of both sexes keep apart as much as possible, at least in their games; a strict reserve is imposed upon them.

The family does not like renouncing the services of its young girls. In a number of popular tales they are exhibited as prevented by their brothers from marrying their lover.[1] Dowry is no obstacle; they carry away with them a knife, like a saddler's, a chopper, a scraper, and

[1] Rink, *Eskimo Tales*.

finally, if means allow, a lamp; in return they receive a complete costume; when they accept this the matter is settled. Almost always the youth simulates violence and rape; he feels to a certain extent obliged to commit an assault upon the person of his intended. But no sooner is the wedding over than the bride and bridegroom exercise no further discretion, and appear strangers to all modesty. The missionaries are indignant and rebuke their indecency, their excessive unconstraint.[1] These big children have not passed the animal period, and have yet to learn that all physical needs should not be satisfied in public. They excuse themselves by pointing to the narrow space in which they are immured during the long months of winter; a mere hole in the snow to crouch in, where they can never stretch themselves at full length even to sleep.

Our disgust may well be excited by this swinish promiscuity. But let us look to it that we do not take credit to ourselves, and boast of a morality due to superior comfort.

All travellers agree that the number of women amongst the Inoits considerably exceeds that of men. An anomaly easily accounted for. Despite their skill in steering their little boats in the heaviest seas, numbers of fishermen are drowned during their perilous expeditions. A *kayak* is like the pitcher that goes so often to the well that it breaks. The consequence of this masculine mortality is polygamy. It is a point of honour amongst neighbours to look after a family that has lost its head. Some one undertakes to marry the widow and adopt the children, even though by so doing he takes two sisters at once or the mother with the daughter.[2] The Etayans, destitute of boats, and with fewer sources of livelihood at their disposal, are, as a compensation, less exposed to the perils of the sea. Consequently their masculine population is equivalent to

[1] Grundemann, *Kleine Missions Bibliothek.* [2] Crantz.

the feminine. Every Jack has his Jill and no more. This monogamy, however, is but apparent. Here, as according to the rule laid down in the *Romance of the Rose*, all are made for all. Chastity is no Esquimaux virtue. When a certain south wind blows every woman is out on the loose. Each knows a hut where the goodman is at home and the goodwife on the prowl. Thus on the spot where the human race begins does the institution of matrimony make its first appearance; adultery is a daily escapade, and on this point a husband never picks a quarrel with his better half. There is one condition however, namely, that the wife seek her pleasure with another husband, to whom the husband would willingly have lent her at the faintest hint on his part.[1] Members of the Marital Association keep running accounts and open large credits. Amongst the Esquimaux, as amongst the Caribs of the Orinoco,[2] what is lost may be regained, provided always that the game is played between comrades. But things would take another turn if the lawful wife should forget herself with a bachelor, to whom the *lex talionis* could not be applied.

Curious relic of a primitive epoch, this fraternity of husbands appropriating the whole community of wives and children. The tribe is thus one great brotherhood. All husbands pass as brothers, all wives as sisters; all cousins are brothers and sisters; one generation of brethren succeeds another.

In our civilised societies every child, or at least every normally developed child, who sees daylight, thereby acquires the right to live; parents who kill their infant children are punished with much the same severity as other murderers; public opinion, moreover, delivers them up to contumely. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that so much value has always attached to the life of an atom, a personification of weakness, as yet a mere promise, a hope afar off. Perhaps no fact is a better measure of the

[1] Ross, *Second Voyage.* [2] Gumilla.

progress effected by our species since the glacial period; for moral progress is dishearteningly slow, and is only perceptible after the lapse of endless ages. Our ancestors did not admit that a new-born infant had a right to existence. The mother had let it fall to the ground; there it must remain until the head of the family (I was going to say the father), until the master either picked it up himself or permitted others to do so. Before he gave the sign, the object counted as little more than a clod; it was as yet but so much organic clay. Hence those numberless legends of children carried away into the wilderness or the forest, exposed at cross-roads, placed in an osier basket and deserted at the water's edge. For the few who were picked up, as we are told, or suckled by hinds, wolves, or bears, how many were devoured, how many torn to pieces by ravens![1] Hence, again, those fatal days when a child was only born to be put to death. Hence those cruel laws, those ghastly horoscopes, which decimated the boys, or took a third from amongst the girls.[2] Hence those odiously strange practices to decide the legitimacy or illegitimacy of births; all pure allegations, miserable pretexts. It was merely for dupes that the decrees of the Fates, the purity of the race, were brought upon the stage. The reality was far simpler! A small number of children only could be fed, therefore the rest must be got rid of. And amongst many pretexts the most obscure seemed the least painful. As the voice of pity became audible, it was contrived that the odium of the executions should fall upon chance, upon remote causes. But whatever the auguries might say, the number of infants kept was proportionate to the means of subsistence; sucklings deprived of their mother were always put out of the way. In Germany the children of a pauper were thrown into the same grave with their father. It has not been often enough said, often enough repeated: civilisation augments with food,

[1] As in Madagascar. [2] Rajpootana, the Todas, etc.

and food with civilisation. The human race is a question of provisions. The more bread the more men, and the better the bread is distributed the better will the men become.

Bessels saw the head of a family, the father of three children, die. Thereupon the mother alleged the impossibility of supporting her youngest born, a baby six months old, smothered it in a twinkling, and laid it in her husband's grave. It was for the father-spirit to load his shoulder with the bantling and to provide for its wants in that other world, where they say that food is dealt out less parsimoniously than in this.

Infanticide, then, so far from being the deed of unnatural parents, has passed as a right, and even as a necessity, which it would be criminal to shirk. It follows that abortion has been an everyday occurrence. Amongst many savages it is, as a matter of course, not allowable for a girl whilst she is unmarried to have a child, for whose subsistence she cannot provide. Should she be brought to bed notwithstanding, it is the duty of the parties concerned to despatch her offspring; but if she simplifies matters by getting rid of it beforehand, so much the better!

To return to our Esquimaux. Those who foresee that they will not be able to bring up a child have recourse to abortion. They strike and compress themselves with a whip-handle or some heavy object, but without always attaining their end, for they seem made, say the obstetricians, to conceive readily and to bear the fœtus in safety. Many perform upon themselves a difficult surgical operation with the aid of a well-sharpened seal rib; they wrap the edge with a leather, which they remove and replace by means of a thread. It does not appear how many die or are disabled in consequence.

Malthusianism, the last word of official economics, the last word also of declining nationalities, is largely practised by these primitive races, who allow each woman but two or

three living children, and kill either boy or girl who commits the crime of being born in addition. The mother herself fills the office of executioner, strangling the infant or exposing it in one of those crevices that abound between the stationary ice on shore and the floating ice to seaward. A sorry cradle, where the waves at high tide seize upon the poor little one, and, if it be not already dead, finish it by rolling it upon the beach and scraping it against the shingle.

But these executions are repugnant to mothers, especially when the child cries for life, and opens wide eyes upon the daylight. Opinion pronounces more and more against infanticide, and only allows it in cases of necessity. Moreover, it is said to bring misfortune upon the village, where the lamentable wailing of the poor innocent is heard at night. The same belief obtains in Lapland. The mothers there cut out the little one's tongue before casting it away in the forest.[1]

Though the Inoits practise abortion and strangle their superfluous progeny, they are not, for all that, bad mothers. Their solicitude is touching, their care for their children endless, both before and after birth. A pregnant woman is excused from all heavy toil. (Why do not our civilised communities learn the same lesson?) And she eats only of game brought home by the husband, game unwounded in the entrails,[2] two prescriptions demanding a commentary. The child, even when born in wedlock, would run a risk of becoming a bastard if he were nourished by other food than that brought or offered by his father. This is one of the practices of the so-called *couvade*,[3] which is in itself

[1] *Nouvelle Revue.* [2] Rink, *Eskimo Tales.*

[3] *Couvade*, literally, brooding, hatching, sitting. A term used to express the simulation of maternity by the father amongst certain savages. To make good his claim to the child which the mother has produced for the community, the father not only feeds her and it as above, but in some tribes undergoes a fictitious confinement, keeps his bed, and is supplied with possets and caudles.

sufficient to explain it; for when a father wishes to recognise a child he is anxious to take his part in sustaining it. Over in Esquimaux Land they insist far more than we upon the correlation between an organism and the nourishment that constitutes it. The bowels of the animal must be unwounded, lest those of the woman should suffer sympathetically. This last belief is not peculiar to the Inoits, far from it; we find it again in India,[1] in Abyssinia, and in Zanzibar, and we know the Swedish legends, telling how it happened to the lady of the castle to die or to miscarry, because her knight had heedlessly slain a hind with young.

With tender solicitude, kind friends pour the contents of a chamber-pot over the head of a woman in labour, to invigorate her, as they say. After deliverance, they cut the umbilical cord with their teeth or sometimes with the edge of a shell, never with knife or scissors. This cord is carefully preserved that it may bring luck to the new-born infant. As soon as possible the young mother partakes of a mince, wherewith appropriate morsels have been mingled, such as the heart, lungs, liver, stomach, and intestines of some sturdy animal: a means of procuring for the nursling health, vigour, and a long life. For some days no fire is lighted in the hut, and nothing can be put to cook over the domestic lamp, no bone must be carried from the dwelling, the father and mother have each their separate crock, from which all others are forbidden to drink; during six weeks the parents are prohibited from eating outside, and the mother from crossing the threshold. When this term has expired, she clothes herself anew and makes a round of visits; never again touching the garments worn before her "churching." For a year she will never eat alone. All these prescriptions may be paralleled in the course of a thorough search through our folk-lore.

[1] Cf. *Maha Bharata, Adi Parva.*

The mother reserves the finest furs for her new-born infant, the father the daintiest morsels from the chase. To make its eyes beautiful, limpid, and bright, he gives it seal's eyes to eat. They take a pleasure in giving it the name of some one who has lately died, "that the departed may have rest in the tomb."[1] There is much in a name. Later we may expect our child to defy the influences that caused his godfather's death. Did the worthy man die in salt water? Well then, let our boy be a sea-dog.

All over Esquimaux Land fathers and mothers vie with one another in spoiling their offspring, never strike, and rarely rebuke them. The little creatures show themselves grateful, and neither whimper nor whine. The growing urchins pass through no thankless age, and are neither unruly nor cross-grained, contradictory nor tiresome; ingratitude is not their way; no Inoit ever raises his hand against father or mother. In Danish Greenland, sons are seen renouncing advantageous positions to visit their parents once more or to care for them in their old age. Family affection is an Esquimaux virtue. "Mother Plum-Cake" is an Inoit; an Inoit too that father whom a traveller saw sobbing (you might have cut him in pieces without his uttering a groan)—sobbing because his boy could not crack a whip so loud as his playmates. These tender fathers, however, are careful not to turn their dearly-loved sons into milksops. The boys are to be made indefatigable hunters, and to help matters, their food is dished up on the big boots so well seasoned with paternal sweat.

Nursing mothers rival kangaroos, carrying their nursling in their hood or in one of their boots until its seventh year, and suckling it the whole time. It is never weaned; consequently their teats become hideously elongated. Great lads, hobble-de-hoys of fifteen, have been observed to stand upon no ceremony about feeding from their mother's breast whilst waiting for supper, on their return from hunt-

[1] Rink, *Eskimo Tales.*

ing. This prolonged lactation shows a desire to secure some nourishment to the child during repeated seasons of scarcity, and is a means of doing so; it is also a token of tenderness and affection. Thus in Tartar legends we read:—

"The hero Kosy bestrode the charger Burchun, and made his prayer. His mother wept, 'Arrive in safety!' and uncovering her breast, 'Drink thence once more, and it shall recall thy mother to thy remembrance.'"[1]

There are Esquimaux who go further in their demonstrations of affection, and, carrying their complaisance as far as Mamma Puss and Mamma Bruin, lick their babies to clean them, lick them well over from head to foot. A bestial sort of tenderness, galling to our vanity as superior beings. They would not see the slightest irony in the nursery rhyme sung at Cologne; verselets that a writer of the naturalistic school would translate without hesitation—

"Wer soll de Windle wasche,
Der muss den Dreck wegfrasse!"[2]

We have said that the existence of societies, like that of individuals, depends upon the food at their disposal; as the quantity augments, the population increases. But if the nourishment becomes insufficient, obviously insufficient, it becomes also an absolute necessity to get rid of the unserviceable mouths, the social non-utilities. The lifetime of those who have the least life before them is cut short; the right to live is the possibility of living. Under these conditions, the murder of children finds a melancholy counterpart in the murder of the aged; the latter are deserted, the former are exposed. Such is the law against which these wretched societies strive as they can. When it is necessary to choose, some sacrifice the children, and even the women, to save the aged. Amongst others, all the old

[1] Radloff, *Volkslitteratur der Türkischen Stämme Süd Siberiens*, ii. 281, and iv. 344.

[2] Panzer, *Sammlung*, etc.

are sacrificed before a hand is raised against one flaxen poll. Most often the grandparents claim to be immolated in place of the little ones, as a right or as a favour. Let it suffice us to have stated the law, without enforcing it by the examples that might be drawn from our ancestors and from many primitive peoples. Do we execrate the cruelty of those hordes and tribes which have not as yet attained to humanity? How often would they prefer to show compassion—if it lay in their power!

It is a matter of course that the sick should generally share the fate of the aged, since they too live upon the masses who have but short rations to dispose of. As long as hope remains the invalid is treated with assiduous attention. The women chant their *Aya, Aya* in chorus, for they know the power of incantations. A stone weighing three or four pounds, according to the gravity of the sickness, is placed by a matron under the pillow. Every morning she weighs it, pronouncing meanwhile words of mystery. Thus she informs herself of the state of the patient and his chances of recovery. If the stone grows constantly heavier, it is because the sick man cannot escape, and his days are numbered.

Then his companions construct, some way off, a hut of blocks of snow; there they spread skin-rugs and furs, and bring a pitcher of water, and a lamp to flicker for a while. And he who is consumed with suffering, crushed beneath the burden of age or growing infirmities, he with whom intercourse has become a difficulty, he who reproaches himself that he costs the community more than he can repay, lays himself down; brothers and sisters, wives, as many as he possesses, sons and daughters, relatives and friends, come to say farewell, to converse with him whom they shall see no more. They remain no longer than is necessary, for should death overtake the sick man, the visitors must hastily strip off their garments and throw them away, a serious loss. No ostensible emotion, no

cries, tears, sobs; they converse quietly and reasonably. He who is about to depart enjoins his requests, expresses his last desires. When he has said all, the friends withdraw one by one, and the last stops the entrance with a block of ice. From that moment the man is dead to the community. Life is but the total of social relations, a series of actions and reactions called pleasures and pains, differing from one another less than we imagine. Death, all said and done, is an individual act. Animals understand it so, and if they have the rare chance to end otherwise than by being slain or devoured, they go, directly they feel weakness gain upon them, to hide in the thickest brake, burrow in the deepest hole, or disappear into the darkest cavern. From this standpoint primitive man is still an animal; he knows that he must die alone. Nowhere is the expression more literally true than amongst the Esquimaux. It is permissible to see hideous and repulsive egoism in this last scene of their life; it is permissible also to see in it a solemn and impressive act, stamped with gloomy majesty.

Already the hut is but a tomb, the tomb of a living man, who may yet linger for some hours, perhaps for some days. He hears the door close, the voices die away in the distance. With bent head, and hands resting upon his knees, he thinks and remembers. What he saw, what he felt in bygone days returns to his mind; he recalls his childhood, his youth, his exploits, his loves, his hunting, his adventures; step by step he retraces his life. No more hopes now, no more projects; and as for regrets, of what use are they? What is pride now? what vanity? No one to envy, no one to despise. Alone, face to face with himself, he can measure that self at its true value. "I was that, so much and no more." To quit life, its weariness, its frequent famines, its vexations, its griefs—to that he could easily resign himself. But the terrible unknown, the beyond, that it is which affrights him, that world of spirits about which the *Angakoots* relate such fearful visions. . . . He is parched with

fever; it consumes his vitals, devours his entrails. He drinks a few mouthfuls, but falls back exhausted. The lamp is gone out; no night was ever more gloomy; and upon his veiled and darkened eyes dawns Death. He sees Death plainly; it shows itself upon the horizon, a black spot on the great white plain, lighted by the pale rays of the stars. Death advances, Death draws near. It grows minute by minute, gliding noiseless over the thick snow. He counts its steps. . . . Death is here. Already it balances in its hand the harpoon with which he has transfixed so many a bear and seal. It stands erect, it raises its hand. He waits, waits. . . .

On seeing such a hut, isolated, mysterious, and on learning what was passing within, strangers have been seized with horror and pity. They have broken down the wall—what have they seen? A dead man with eyes wide open upon infinity; or else a dying person murmuring in reproachful accents, "What do you do? Why do you trouble me? Was it not enough to die once?"

The Tchouktches, who are generally taken to be a branch of the Inoit stem, hold it weakness and false compassion not roughly to hasten the steps of the departing. It is better to have done with life once for all than to taste the long bitterness of death, or to be consumed with pain. Accordingly they despatch people in various fashions; but do not accuse them of introducing any sentimentality into the process!

The individual who permits himself to be ill for more than seven days is seriously admonished by his neighbours, who, fastening a cord round his neck, begin to run briskly round the house. If he fall, so much the worse! He will be dragged over stones and briars, jerk, jerk! Kill or cure! After half-an-hour of this treatment he is dead, or declares himself recovered. If, despite all this, he still hovers between life and death, he is pushed or carried to the cemetery, where he is incontinently stoned or run through

in such fashion that he wavers no longer. Dogs are let loose upon his corpse to devour it, and these dogs in their turn are eaten. Nothing is lost, nothing shall be lost. These Tchouktches are even more strong-minded than our liberal economists of the Manchester School.

Men of courage, and they are not rare, men of courage who feel themselves beginning to decline, assemble their relatives and friends at a farewell feast, where they cheerfully do the honours. After the last course the guests judiciously retire, and the host lays himself down on his side to receive the hearty spear-thrust dealt him by the kindness of a comrade; or, more frequently, he applies to some sturdy fellow, whom he pays and places in ambush for the purpose.

Aged and enfeebled persons, those who are positively useless, are asked if they have not had enough of it. It is their duty, their honour, to reply yes. Thereupon an oval pit is roughly excavated in the graveyard, and filled with moss; large and heavy stones are rolled to the extremities to secure two horizontal poles. On the head-stone a reindeer is slaughtered, its blood flowing in torrents over the moss. The old man stretches himself upon this warm, red, downy couch. In the twinkling of an eye he finds that he is bound to the poles. Then he is asked, "Art thou ready?" At this stage of the proceedings it would be shame and folly to articulate a negative response, besides they would pretend not to hear it. "Good-night, friends!" They stop his nostrils with a stupefying substance; they open his carotid artery and a large vein in his arm; in no time he has bled to death.

This surgical operation is performed by persons of quality, or simply by women, according to the consideration enjoyed by the individual. If the obsequies are specially distinguished, the body is burnt with that of the reindeer, which is supposed to serve for banquets in the other world. If the departed was of the commonalty, he is merely buried, and the "mourners" consider it their duty to eat the reindeer

on his behalf. They break its bones. Why? Probably that it may not be reborn upon earth, but remain the property of the dead in the Tchouktche Hades.

When the like customs are perpetuated amongst a hardy nation of warriors and pirates, men crave the honour of dying upon the field of battle. At need, they will make sham duels a pretext for being despatched by a comrade, after the fashion of the Scandinavians. They will say like the old Greeks: He who dies young is beloved of the gods.

Funeral rites are less uniform than other customs. The majority of Esquimaux bury their dead beneath a heap of stones or in the crevices of the rocks; the Greenlanders and Labradorians throw them into the sea; their fellows in Asia burn or bury them or cause them to be eaten by beasts. Each thinks his own method the best. But there is a general belief that death is not the limit of existence; that the departed exercise a varied and usually a baneful influence on the living; that they are malicious, at least in the condition of ghosts; that they spend their time in suffering from cold and hunger. People refrain as far as possible from approaching their abodes, particularly when these have been lately occupied; but a pious passer-by places, at all events, a few crumbs of food on the tomb. At the grand ceremony of leave-taking, friends and acquaintances bring meat, from which each cuts two slices, one for himself and one for the dead; they slit a blanket: See here, eat! See, cover thyself! The knife used is concealed by those present, who range themselves in a circle and pass it behind them, like children playing hunt-the-slipper. And whilst the blade circulates each speaks to the dead to distract his attention, each has something special to tell him.

As a sign of mourning, the Etayan widow modifies her costume, abstains from certain viands and divers occupations. Her strictest duty is to deprive herself of all attention to cleanliness. Friends stop one of their nostrils with

a plug of grass, which they do not take out for several days: artless symbolism: we breathe but by halves, we are half dead with sorrow! Those who really suffer go in search of perilous adventures, to absorb their regrets in physical fatigue and drown their pain in the passionate excitement produced by a sense of danger.

In these parts they hold fêtes and anniversaries of the dead, corresponding to the Catholic All Saints' Day and the masses at the close of the year. These festivals are celebrated with some differences, according to the locality; but everywhere there is dancing, jumping, and acting in dumb show of what profess to be biographies. The entertainment is given at the expense of the family, who denude themselves of all they have to provide handsomely and make lavish distribution of provisions and furs. Those who are unable to do more give trifles, but no one returns from these feasts empty-handed.

On account of the silhouettes discovered on fossils at Thayingen, it has been asserted that infant races cannot produce drawings superior to the daubs of school-boys. This *à priori* assumption is borne out by numerous examples: the Bochimans, the Australians, and many others. Our Inoits represent hunting and fishing scenes, bears, whales, and seals correctly enough.[1] Sharp stones, bad knives, extremely hard ivory, rugged horns, irregularly curved bones—what thankless material, what rebellious instruments! Rink has had his volume of Inoit tales illustrated by a native artist, whose simple but very expressive drawings might pass for those antique prints for which amateurs contend with one another. We recommend to connoisseurs a collection of wood engravings by aborigines.[2]

[1] Dall, *Alaska.*

[2] *Kaladlit Assialiait.* Printed at Gothaeb, in Greenland, by Müller & Berthelsen, 1860.

These Esquimaux possess in a high degree the sense of form and relative proportion. Geometrical abstraction is so easy to them that they have drawn out maps of their country sufficiently accurate to be useful to explorers. The plans of Noutchegak and other localities drawn out by Oustiakof, one of these savages, were long considered sufficiently exact. Hall has adorned his book with a plate of Rescue Harbour, the work of Coodjissi. Rey showed one of his sea-charts to a native, who understood it perfectly, asked for a pencil and traced another with a larger number of islands—a precious addition.[1] These talents enhance the interest attaching to the Esquimaux, and give them importance in the study of mental development. Hindoos and Parsees and Mussulmans, otherwise extremely intelligent,[2] understand nothing about our pictures, drawings, and photographs, showing on this point an astonishing want of capacity. A learned Brahmin, who was shown the likeness of a horse, the winner of the Derby, asked, apparently with perfect seriousness, "Does that represent the royal city of London?"[3]

Since Dalton discovered from his own experience that all men do not see tints in a similar manner, it has been noticed, with surprise, that total or partial colour blindness is no uncommon physiological fact. It would appear that only the very centre of the retina is sensitive to shades of colouring, whereas light and shadow impress its whole surface. Thereupon the linguists, with Geiger at their head, have believed that decisive evidence has been adduced for the doctrine of evolution. The names of the colours assigned by Homer to various objects manifestly do not tally with those we attribute to them, if so be that our lexicons give all the signification of the words; thus, it is scarcely probable that Apollo had violet hair. Upon this

[1] Yule, *Ava.* [2] Ross, *Second Voyage.*

[3] Schwartzbach, de Graaf Reynet, *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie de Vienne*, 1882.

ground the linguists in question believed themselves justified in affirming that the sense of colour had been modified in our species during the historical period. The theory was so favourably received as to become fashionable. The illustrious Mr. Gladstone, then First Lord of the Treasury, thought well to espouse it. People saw in it a proof of the superiority of our civilised races over their intellectual ancestry of Greece and Rome, and still more over all savages. They did not stop to consider that the Tartars, who perceive Jupiter's moons with the naked eye, or the Zulus, whose visual capacity is to ours as 3 to 2, could, if they gave themselves the trouble, distinguish shades imperceptible to our gaze; and that the Hottentots, the miserable Hottentots, have actually thirty-two expressions to designate different colours. In itself the Geiger theory appears plausible; we should even say that it is true, save that the development in question must have been effected in a period very different in length from three or four thousand years.

However this may be, the matter once occupied some of the best minds of the day, and Bessels painted a sheet of paper ruled in squares with different colours, and questioned thereon thirteen Etayans, men, women, and children, each separately. All distinguished the white, yellow, dark green, and black squares, but none appeared to differentiate brown and blue. The observation is interesting, but not decisive. It must be remembered how scholars are taught that to see one must look, and to hear, listen. We only perceive clearly the objects upon which the efforts of the intelligence have already directed our awakened attention. Piercing eyes do not enable their possessor to recognise as many shades of colour as a Gobelin sorter or to appreciate the chromatic scale that a painter comprehends without an effort. An unpractised ear is but a mediocre instrument beside that of the musician who discovers the false semitone that has escaped one performer amidst the volume

of sound poured forth by a powerful orchestra. In what we take for the silence of the forest, the poacher, the game-keeper notice significant noises, such as escape all for whom they have no meaning. If these Inoits confuse brown and blue, the fault is assuredly not in their visual organs, but in their indifference; they would doubtless distinguish them if for a generation or two they had an interest in so doing.

So much for what we had to say of the Northern Esquimaux, taking the village of Etah as our point of departure. No tribe has a better right to patient and conscientious study. It counts, it is true, but some hundred individuals, occupies but half-a-dozen hovels and dens; but this hamlet is literally at the end of the earth, and its people, sentinels lost amid ice and snow, are at once the last denizens of the inhabited world and the most primitive of men.

CHAPTER II.

THE WESTERN INOITS, ESPECIALLY THE ALEUTIANS.

CONTIGUOUS to the peninsula of Alaska, between the 51st and 60th degrees north latitude, lies the Aleutian or Kurile Archipelago, which Behring discovered in 1741. Thence it was, if the novelist Eugène Sue is to be believed, that the Wandering Jew set out upon the adventures which once thrilled a literary generation. The group is composed of about sixty islands and reefs, resembling so many stones that Ahasuerus, the great traveller, might have thrown across the ford of the Kamtschadale Sea in passing from Asia to America.

Ounimak, the largest, covers between 3100 and 3700 square miles, being the fifth part of the entire surface of the Archipelago. Rugged rocks, difficult of approach, give it a sombre and desolate aspect. The landscapes of the interior, scarcely less severe, show us mighty piles of granite reflected in the black waters of the lakes and peaty bogs. A furrowed soil and vast mounds of lava indicate geological cataclysms and violent upheavals. Through these latitudes passes the line of the great boreal volcanoes. Some of the craters, their summits covered with everlasting snow, smoke incessantly; others burst forth at intervals. The traces of former eruptions are to be met with at every step; on all sides there are rocks blackened by fire. The entire continental part of the district of Ounalaska is traversed by a chain of high peaks, among which are nine extinct craters. Subterranean fires have transformed the island of Ounimak, where Chichaldin, about 9840 feet in height, still emits flames spasmodically.

In December 1830, amidst a fierce storm of thunder and lightning, it became wrapped in a thick fog, and when this had cleared away its shape had changed. The volcanic effects have, however, diminished in intensity since the days when the mountains contended with one another. "Once upon a time the mountains of Ounimak and of Ounalaska struggled for pre-eminence. They flung flames and stones at each other. The little volcanoes, not being able to hold their own against the big ones, exploded with a great noise and went out for ever. There remained but two peaks, the Makouchin of Ounalaska and the Retchesnoï of Ounimak. Fire, stones, and cinders destroyed all the living creatures, so suffocating did they make the atmosphere. Retchesnoï succumbed; and when he saw himself defeated, he collected what remained of his strength, swelled up, burst, and became extinct. Makouchin, victorious, fell asleep, and now he emits only a little smoke from time to time."[1]

The climate, maritime in its character, is neither warm nor very cold, but extremely moist. The thermometer, as Wiljaminof observed at Ounalaska, oscillated to the extent of 38°, the mean temperature being 4°. The summer, which is truly beautiful, lasts but ten weeks, from the middle of July to the end of September. In October the snow begins to fall, and does not thaw until May. In the southern isles the greatest rainfall is in spring. Sitka is reckoned one of the most humid places on the globe. Autumn brings continuous fogs.[2]

In the summer grass and brushwood are plentiful, but the sun does not succeed in making the trees shoot, except on the islands close to the mainland, where aspens and birches abound, as well as cypresses, pines, and firs. The cereals, the introduction of which has been attempted, have not ripened. Cabbages, potatoes, and various vegetables reward the pains of the foreign colonists; notwithstanding which the natives have always disdained to

[1] Venjaminof. [2] Von Kittlitz.

cultivate the land, having no taste for this kind of labour. There are flowers, but without perfume; and no lack of berries, but they are watery and insipid. The poultry that have been imported are obliged to feed upon fish; hence their eggs smell putrid, and seem as if filled with cod-liver oil. Several coal-mines yield a fuel of which no great use has been made. The Aleutians of the older generation warm themselves by crouching over a fire of weeds.

The striking resemblance of the Aleutians to the Yakouts and the Kamtschadales has caused a Mongolian origin to be attributed to them. Dall, who has studied them long and carefully, affirms, upon the authority of local traditions, that the Inoits, driven out of America by incursions of Indians, not more than three centuries ago, emigrated to the north-east extremity of Asia. They themselves speak of a great country situated westward, which they call Aliakhékhac, or Tanduc Angouna, whence they might have come into Ounimak and Ounalaska.[1] It is certain that they are closely related to the tribes of the American coast, Ahts and others, as far as Queen Charlotte's[2] Isle. It is true that amongst these uncivilised tribes neighbours bear a close resemblance to one another. The Aleutian type is manifestly sprung from the Esquimaux type, although Rink says that foreign elements are already mingled with them. Their hair is straight and black and abundant, their complexion dark. Short, thick-set, and remarkably sturdy, they carry without showing fatigue heavy loads during long journeys; sixty pounds upon their backs, and a march of thirty odd miles, do not frighten them. Their eyesight is extraordinarily keen. Their features, strongly marked, bear the impress of intelligence and thoughtfulness. The women are more prepossessing than the men, some of them might even be called pretty but for the hideous lip ornament. Dall declares the Aleutians

[1] Venjaminof. [2] Macdonald.

to be much superior to the neighbouring Indians, both physically and intellectually. The heads of the latter are cubic, of the former pyramidal. Under the influence of prolonged dearths and the bad treatment inflicted by the Russians, the race has lost its ancient soundness; its impaired organisms offer but a poor resistance to rheumatism and lung diseases. The figures of the Aleutians are sturdy, as I have said, but not elegant; rowing at a stretch for fifteen or twenty hours deforms the limbs—the body becomes moulded upon the everlasting canoe. Veritable sea-lions are they, with movements heavy and slow, an awkward bearing, the clumsiest of gaits, but for all that skilful and active. They give proof of an astonishing dexterity in their management on the roughest seas of their *kayaks* and *oumiaks*, which are in use as far as California, and of their frail *baidarkas*,[1] of which the Russians have imported a model into Europe. Wiljaminof, comparing them to horsemen whose legs are bowed through constant riding, calls them "Sea Cossacks, riders of marine mares." To show to advantage, such a man should be seen manœuvring the little boat of leather which he has himself made,[2] or brandishing a harpoon amidst the tempestuous waters. From tenderest infancy he has been familiarised to the watery element. The Bedouin rolls his new-born infant in the sand and exposes it to the mid-day sun to accustom it to the heat;[3] the little Aleutian, if he is seized with a desire to wail or bawl, is instantly plunged into water, even if the ice has to be broken. By this treatment they rear only those infants who are tranquil and robust; the weak ones soon disappear.

The Aleutians are divided into two groups identical in aspect, manners, and character, but with some little differences of dialect: the tribes inhabiting Atcha, Ounalaska, the Land of Rats, that of the Foxes, and others to the south of the

[1] *Baydar, bidarra, bidarka.* [2] Kittlitz.
[3] Rampendahl, *Deutsche Rundschau*, vi.

peninsula, besides the Koniagas, the Kadiaks, and the natives round about; and on the mainland the Koloutches of Sitka, the Kenees, Tcherguetches, Medovtsenes and Malegniutes, who all strongly resemble one another. Upon all of them Russian civilisation has inflicted a terrible blow; American civilisation will sweep them away completely.[1]

Around the islands a luxuriant marine vegetation nourishes a varied fauna; the running waters abound in fish, especially trout. The Aleutians live by hunting and fishing. In the struggle for existence their greatest rivals are the bear and the wolf, against whom they wage a desperate warfare; they beat the woods for beech and sable martins, squirrels, beavers, otters, and foxes, and attack the walrus and the narwhal.[2] So long as the waters are open they get what is to be had therein, be it fat or lean; but when these are frozen hard, their least casual resource is digging for roots in the plains and *tundras*. The longest season they have to pass is that of the "short rations"—from February to April—which follows on the time of "good cheer," from November to January.

No event causes them so much excitement as the capture of a whale. They harpoon the enormous cetacean, kill it, and devour it, but at the same time reverence it. They pretend that the animal obeys enchantments, and that, impelled by the spell, half-constrained, half-resigned, it is not unwilling to let itself be captured. At the beginning of the season about fifty men and women put on their finest apparel, and embark to greet upon the high seas the shoal which has been sighted on the horizon, in order that they may compliment it and bid it welcome. For the "Monarch of the Oceans" is a stickler for etiquette, and to keep him in our latitudes we must show him that we are a well-bred people. Master Whale is also a stickler for morality and virtue; he wishes decency and good habits to be respected; he avoids latitudes frequented by base and

[1] Erman. [2] *Monodon monoceros.*

dissolute tribes; does not approve of the whalers who have the honour of attacking him compromising themselves with women during the whaling season; he would even punish them by some terrible chastisement if their wives were unfaithful to the conjugal vow during their absence; he would cause them to perish by a cruel death if their sisters failed in chastity before marriage.[1] If a gale should chance to strand a whale, they receive him with divine honours, cannot thank him too much for his complaisance, and congratulate themselves on having been allowed the privilege of eating his sacred flesh. They advance to the sound of the kettle-drum, harangue the divinity, flatter and compliment him, and execute solemn dances in his honour, the common herd clad in their most beautiful costumes, the whalers and the magicians stark naked, save that their faces are masked, as they are during great ceremonies. Their performance represents the reception given to the Lord of the Water by the Animals of the Land.[2] After these tokens of respect and becoming preliminaries, the drum beats for the last time; men, women, children, and dogs fall upon the huge viand, attack it with teeth and knives, gorging themselves to the throat with a dainty weighing fifty-nine tons! They dig, burrow, bore, excavate until they disappear into the interior, and let daylight through his ribs. Pantagruel and Grandgousier were never at a more glorious feast. It is gluttony upon an heroic scale. Ere long, before the tender and highly-flavoured flesh has quite become carrion, they will have left only the bones. No, not left, because they gnaw them to the last, carrying them away, bit by bit, to make of them a hundred and one tools and instruments, and to use them in place of iron and wood. They turn to account the oil, fat, skin, gills, and fins; in short, of "the mountain of abundance" neither bit nor scrap will have been lost.

Less varied was the food of their ancestors, whose

[1] Venjaminof. [2] Dall.

kjokken moeddings, or culinary refuse, heaped on the sea-shore, have been found by Dall to contain only the shells of eggs and molluses. The investigator concludes from not having found in these heaps any fragment of spear, arrow, or harpoon, that the aborigines were ignorant of even the most rudimentary arts. He considers himself warranted in denying the use of fire to these pilferers of nests, devourers of mussels and sea-urchins, by the fact that no object bearing igneous traces have come under his observation. The assertion is worth noting, but does not appear to be proven; the inference would seem to be greater than the premises. At any rate, be the epoch recent or remote wherein the inhabitants of the Catherine Archipelago became acquainted with fire—at present they obtain it by means of a drill-bow—it is certain that, like all kindred Inoits, they make but a poor attempt at cooking foods, preferring to the modification by heat that produced by frost. They eat food raw, they eat it frozen, they eat it rotten, and they eat a great deal, and like no drink better than oil of seal or whale. With the invasion of the fur-traders and tax-collectors the cooking of food has been introduced and propagated, but the old men of Ounimak deplore the decay of their healthy traditions, protesting against a fatal innovation to which they attribute the feebleness and debility of the younger generations, and the epidemics which carry them off; while on the other hand, it is with the utmost eagerness that they accept alcoholic liquors—the first gift offered by civilisation to barbarism. As for tobacco, every one of them evinced an insane passion for it, which they still retain; for a few shreds of the magic herb men and women used to give everything: their food, and even their liberty.

The habitation has the importance of a physiological organ among the Esquimaux, who have to protect themselves against a deadly climate. We change our garments

according to the season; they have winter and summer habitations. The smallest and least carefully made is the summer dwelling, the *barabore*, which is nearly always erected near a river abounding in fish. It may consist only of a hovel of straw, a shed, a boat turned upside down. The general type is a conical or pyramidal tent, leaning against a low wall of earth and pebbles.

The Aleutians dig a tolerably deep hole, and put against the sides of it poles that meet at the top; these they interlace with trellis-work, overlaid with a thick coating of earth, which soon becomes covered with turf, clothing the whole with a green mantle. A house cannot be distinguished from the surrounding brushwood, and at a distance the village has the effect of tombs in a cemetery.[1] Many of the houses have for their only opening a hole contrived in the top, which is chimney, door, and window, all in one. Access is gained by the roof, whence one must slide down by a pole cut in notches. Where herbage is scanty and wood lacking, they construct the winter house with snow and ice bound together with whalebone; the entrance is a rather narrow subterranean passage, where the temperature is just between the air without and the air within. A bear-skin serves as the door-hanging. The foul gases make their escape—at least some of them—through an opening screened by the intestines of a seal, which, cleaned, oiled, and closely sewn together, are as transparent as unpolished glass. The interior circumference is lined with narrow low benches, that serve as beds. The furniture consists of one or two lamps, two or three pots, and a few dishes, which owe their cleanliness to the tongues of the dogs. These huts are warm on account of the inmates being crowded and pressed together within them. Some of them are 25 feet to 30 feet broad and 100 feet long, sometimes even 300 feet, but then they shelter a tribe, numbering, it may be, several hundreds of

[1] Langsdorf, Kittlitz.

beings. These huge burrows, known by various names,[1] more especially by that of *kachim*, are the joint tenement houses used by the majority of the Hyperboreans, and are to be met with almost everywhere.[2] We look upon them as primitive phalansteries, more or less analogous to bee-hives and wasps' nests, to white and black ant-hills, and to the "republics" of birds. The human polyps are closely allied to the animal colonies; everywhere bands of savages are to be seen burrowing together like families of rats, congregated together in a cave like bats, perched upon the same trees like ravens and crows.

To the great question which in ethnology appears at every turn on the way, "Did the individual precede society, or society precede the individual?" the answer seemed until lately most easy, and the official lesson was glibly repeated: the first individual reproduced himself in male and female, and of this first couple, created superb and vigorous, intelligent and beautiful, was born the first family, which expanded into a tribe, then into peoples and nations. The doctrine was deceptive through its apparent simplicity, and seemed inspired by common sense. But, thanks to geology and palæontology, it was found necessary to relegate the theory of man as springing up out of the middle of the world—after the manner of a Robinson Crusoe landing on his desert isle—to its place among fairy tales. Apart from his fellows, man is man as much as an ant is an ant independent of its ant-hill, as much as a bee is a bee when it has no longer a hive. What isolated man becomes we see in the cellular prisons invented by the philanthropist. Till the contrary be proved, we will suppose that our ancestors began with a collective life, that they depended on their surroundings as much if not more than we. In opposition to the idea that the individual is father of the

[1] *Kagsse*, *kagge*, *karrigi*, *kachim*, *kogim*, out of which has been made *casine* or *cassine*, *igloo*, *oolaas*, *iourt*, etc.

[2] In the two Americas, Malaysia, India, and Indo-China.

society, we suppose that society has been the mother of the individual. The communal dwelling appears to us to have been the support of the collective life, and the great medium of the earliest civilisations. Communal was the habitation, and communal the wives with their children; the men pursued the same prey, and devoured it together after the manner of wolves; all felt, thought, and acted in concert. Everything leads us to believe that at the outset collectivism was at its maximum and individualism at its minimum.

Before leaving the subject we must mention an important observation which is connected with it. Amongst our Hyperboreans, as among a great number of primitive people, such as the Tartars, and, for the most part, the negroes, the construction of the dwellings is, as a matter of course, the business of the women, who take the entire charge of it from the foundation to the top, the husbands only assisting by bringing the materials to the scene of action. The fact has been often quoted as proving the notorious idleness of these uncivilised males, who throw the heaviest labours upon their weaker companions. I prefer to see in this an argument in favour of the hypothesis that woman was the first architect. It is to woman, I think, that mankind owes all that has made us men. Burdened with the children and the baggage, she erected a permanent cover to shelter the little family; the nest for her brood was perhaps a ditch carpeted with moss; by the side of it she set up a pole, with large leaves laid across; and when she thought of fastening three or four of these poles together by their tops, the hut was invented, the hut, the first "interior." She laid there the firebrand, with which she never parts, and the hut became illuminated, the hut was warmed, the hut sheltered a hearth. Has not Prometheus been called the "Father of Men" to make us understand that humanity began with the use of fire? Now, whatever may have been the origin of fire, it is certain that woman has always been the guardian and preserver of this source of life. A day

comes when by the side of a doe which the man has slain the woman sees a fawn. It looks at her with pleading eyes. She has compassion on it, and carries it away in her arms. How many times has not a savage woman been seen to do so! The little creature becomes attached to her, and follows her everywhere. Thus it was that woman reared and tamed animals, and became the mother of pastoral peoples. And that is not all. Whilst the husband devoted himself to the greater game, the woman, engaged with her little ones, collected eggs, insects, seeds, and roots. Of these seeds she made a store in her hut; a few that she let fall germinated close by, ripened, and bore fruit. On seeing this, she sowed others, and became the mother of agricultural peoples. In fact, among all uncivilised men cultivation may be traced to the housewife. Notwithstanding the doctrine which holds sway at present, I maintain that woman was the creator of the primordial elements of civilisation. No doubt woman at the outset was but a human female, but this female nourished, reared, and protected those more feeble than herself, whilst her mate, a terrible savage, knew only how to pursue and kill. Necessity forced him to slay, and the deed was not distasteful. He was, by instinct, a ferocious beast; she, by function, a mother.

During the hunting and fishing season the Aleutians often turned their wives out of doors, forbidding them to cross the threshold of the great *kachim*. Not that it was prohibited to pass the night with the lawful wife, but it had to be done stealthily, and it was necessary to be back one or two hours before the "up all hammocks" of the shaman, who, clad in his robes of ceremony, beat upon a drum and called the men to arms.[1] This bit of information explains sufficiently how the communal houses were disintegrating under the influence of private households, even if they had not been battered down by foreigners calling themselves the agents of a higher civilisation—that is to say, of superior arms.

[1] Bancroft, *Native Races of America.*

In such of these buildings as still exist, the central part is open, and belongs to all. The sides are divided at equal distances by a small cord, which pens the families, each into its own compartment; it might be called a stable, with a double row of boxes. Each household has a right to a space which would seem to us hardly sufficient for a single horse. Upon the floor, father, mother, and progeny huddle around the lamp. Every family owns a boat on the sea and a lamp in the *kachim*. To economise space they sleep either in a niche hollowed in the wall, and lined with skins, or crouched upon their heels, with chin on knees, the attitude in which many primitive people always place their corpses. Dall, who has sifted "the kitchen refuse," and the ruins of several prehistoric *kachims*, is convinced that these dwellings were inhabited simultaneously by the living and the dead. If one of the occupants happened to die, they dug a hole under his accustomed place and put him in, covering it up again with the earth. Two feet of clay separated the inhabitants of two worlds. It may be so.

There is no fire save the tiny flame of the lamps intended for melting the ice to make it into drinkable water. The heat of all these living bodies pressed closely together in a small space—it is one of the enclosures we spoke of as being inhabited by two or three hundred persons—suffices to send the temperature up to such a high degree that all, men and women, girls and boys, take off their clothing.

Nothing astonishes us more, accustomed as we are to police supervision, and grown old in the civilisation of thirty centuries or thereabouts, than the absence of modesty, and the paradisiacal innocence of the greater number of these Hyperboreans, who are accustomed to go naked almost always in the communal house, and who bathe together, like the Japanese men and women, without thinking evil. There is no physiological function nor natural want which they hesitate about satisfying in public. "A

custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as one of our travellers philosophically remarks.[1] But to this may be added that the Aleutian, curious being, exhibits sometimes a reserve which astonishes and almost shocks us; for instance, before a stranger he would not dare address a word to his wife nor ask of her the slightest service.

Although generally dirty, these people have, like the other Inoits and the majority of the Indians, a love of vapour baths, for which the *kachim* always provides the means. They rub their bodies with urine, which they carefully preserve for their tanning operations; the alkali therein, mingling with the exhalations and the oils with which the body is impregnated, cleanses the skin as soap would do. The acrid odour of this putrified liquor appears to be agreeable to them, but it catches the breath of strangers, who recoil suffocated, and have great difficulty in getting accustomed to it.[2]

Horrible!

Horrible! Yes, for those who have a cake of soap on their toilette table. But what about those who do not possess this detergent? And those that do possess it are perhaps ignorant that even gloves, those articles of luxury and elegance made for the covering of white hands and plump arms, are soaked in the yolk of an egg, to which is added a large quantity of the aforesaid amber liquid; an indispensable operation, it seems, to give the skins the requisite suppleness and elasticity. For a long while this same substance gave its beautiful orange tints to Dutch cheese, and to the Virginia tobacco something of its penetrating aroma.[3] Even to-day, in several civilised countries, in Paris itself, many individuals, unaccustomed to the emollescence of glycerine and milk of bitter almonds, entertain a prejudice in favour of the Aleutian lotion, which in their opinion cleanses better than any other substance,

[1] Dall. [2] Zagoskine.
[3] Malte-Brun, *Annales* xiv., *Description de la Guyane.*

and even preserves the health—an assertion contested by the doctors, who attribute to this toilette-water certain cases of blood-poisoning and purulent ophthalmia. The custom used to be universal. "To cleanse the teeth with urine is Spanish fashion," said Erasmus.[1] The Spaniards inherited it from their prehistoric ancestors. "To wash themselves and to cleanse the teeth, the Cantabrians, men and women, use the urine which they have allowed to stagnate in reservoirs."[2] "Although the Celtiberians are careful of their persons and cleanly in their manner of living, they wash the body all over in urine, rubbing even the teeth with it, esteeming it as a good means of preserving the health of the body."[3]

> "Nunc Celtiber es: Celtiberiâ in terra
> Quod quisque minxit, hoc sibi solet mane
> Dentem atque russam defricare gingivam."[4]

It is therefore by no means astonishing that the Wahabis[5] and Ugogos of East Africa[6] still do likewise. But even in this matter people have preferences. Thus the Arabs and Bedouins prefer the urine of camels.[7] The Banians of the Momba wash their faces with cows' urine, because, say they, the cow is their mother.[8] This is employed also by the Silesian women as a preventative of freckles.[9] The Chewsures of the Caucasus find it good for preserving the health and for making the hair grow luxuriantly. For this purpose they carefully collect the liquid manure of the cattle-sheds, but the liquid still impregnated with the vital warmth is accounted the most effective. The milkers caress the animal, tickle it, whistle to it, and at the right moment put out their heads to receive the torrent that pours forth. An industrious mother lets it stream over the head of her nursling at the same time as over her own.[10]

[1] *De civilitate morum puerilium.*
[2] Strabo, III., iv. 16.
[3] Diodorus, v. 33.
[4] Catullus, *Epigram*, 39.
[5] Krapf, *Reise in Ost Afrika.*
[6] Maltzan, *Wallfahrt nach Mekka.*
[7] Von Seetzen.
[8] Krapf.
[9] Bodin, *Europa.*
[10] Radde.

Such were, and such are, the first steps towards bodily cleanliness.

"Aleutian industry corresponds to that of the reindeer period," says M. Cartailliac, who speaks with authority. This industry certainly was primitive. Whosoever had need of glue struck himself a blow on the nose, knowing that blood was a glutinous substance. Nowadays the people are better off. Changes in dwellings, tools, furniture, clothing, and religion, were quickly suggested to them by the models brought by the Russian traders, or imposed upon them by the conquerors. Merchandise of American production has not been long in taking the place of that but lately sent from St. Petersburg and Moscow. Woollen stuffs, and even linen, have invaded their wardrobes, but cannot quite supersede the fur garments of the country; the women have good reason for not altogether abandoning a costume which is very becoming to them, and which they embellish with fringes and glass beads. The men too are still faithful to a dress composed of sea-birds' plumage, from which the water drips without wetting it. They use shoes made of fish-skin, but this shoe-leather must not go near fire, else it would shrivel up and grow soft, and in a few moments it would be perfectly useless. They wear stockings woven from a kind of marsh grass. Out of the skin of the sturgeon they manufacture very useful cloaks. The men like to muffle themselves with the muzzle and tail of a wolf.[1] Until recently the Aleutians were remarkable for their love of finery and tattooing; but the frightful oppression to which they have been subjected has made them give up their vanity.[2] If at times they daub their faces with colours or charcoal, it is intended less for adornment than for protection against the sea-spray, which in evaporating deposits salt that tends to irritate the skin and make it chap. Most Esquimaux women always tattoo the forehead, cheeks, and chin; the

[1] Zagoskine. [2] Langsdorf.

married women claiming this as their privilege, and using it as "a mark of high distinction," as they told Hall. Formerly the Aleutians used to engrave upon their skins the forms of birds and fishes.[1] The daughters of rich and distinguished families made a practice of representing the exploits of their ancestors by means of designs and varied symbols which indicated the number of enemies slain or animals overcome.[2] They cut their hair with a flint, the women clipping the front locks, and the men cultivating an imposing tuft. The latter used to bore a hole through the lower lip and through their ears, in order to place there small shells, tiny pebbles, or threads of red wool, indicative of some exploit. Indeed they went further still, and enlarged their nostrils, already very large, in order to fix therein a small bone the size of a quill; for they were not insensible to the allurements of beauty. Jealous of this embellishment, their worthy spouses wear on their necks, as well as on their wrists and ankles, coloured stones and amber beads. So far this would meet with the approbation of European ladies; but unfortunately they insert in the lower lip a *labrette*, or little cylinder of either mother-of-pearl or wood, which, by keeping the mouth continually open, causes the saliva to flow down the chin. We must say that the Aleutians, Thlinkets, and various Inoits were not and are not alone in wearing the lip ornament, but that the Botocudos and innumerable African tribes are also partial to this kind of gewgaw, which is an insult to the human face. Uncomfortable and absurd in the extreme as is this hideous appendage, they consider it perfectly fascinating! The thing exists; it has therefore a sufficient reason, to speak after the manner of Leibnitz.

The reflection of the sun upon the snow and the waves dazzles the eyes and causes blindness; this they prevent by means of enormous spectacles of a fantastic appearance, or by a helmet of leather or wood, with a large visor,

[1] Malte-Brun, *Annales des Voyages*, xiv. [2] Venjaminof.

recalling that which worthy Daumier conferred upon Academicians and other members of the Institute. The natives make this article out of the wood which comes to them from the Seas of China and Japan. Softened as it is by long immersion, they have only to give it the desired curve, and then leave it to dry. This helmet is of various shapes and divers colours. Most often it is streaked with white and light blue, or even with yellow or red; ivory carvings ornament the crest, the back is garnished with a plume of feathers, the front bristles with the fur of a bear and the whiskers and moustaches taken from the seals and sea-lions, whose muzzles have been reproduced with a naïve fidelity charming to the connoisseur.[1] Cook has ere this commented on the taste and finish of these works of art; the majority of visitors bear similar witness, and praise the excellent rendering of the designs. A half-breed, one Kriukof, painted in distemper portraits of a striking resemblance, and Chamisso made out nine species of dolphins and whales in pictures done by the natives. Gifted in a high degree with the talent of imitation, they have learned from the Russians, by merely watching them, nearly all the handicrafts. They are enthusiastic chess-players. They become masters of the arts of reading and writing almost as a pastime. The children seem apt in grasping a knowledge of elementary mathematics, and, what above all charmed the excellent Venjaminof, they seemed to understand the dogmas of the Christian religion.

The girls wear the masks, which have already been alluded to, when they become marriageable, an important epoch during which they are shut up at a distance from the dwelling-places, and put under hygienic treatment and a special diet. The Koloshes take further precautions, and enclose them in wicker cages. Grotesque coverings for the head prevent them from either seeing or being seen. It is feared that a glance, a single glance, from these unlucky girls

[1] Sauer, Von Kittlitz.

might sully even the light of day, and bring bad luck upon everything about them, just as if they were vampires.

This people are supposed to have got as far as marriage. Granted; but what kind of marriage?

In Aleutia those most nearly related to each other contract a union, the brother with the sister, and sometimes the father with the daughter. Langsdorf reproached an Aleutian with so doing; he replied, "Why not? the otters do it!"

The wooer presents himself, bearing a gift—some trifle—at the house of the father and mother-in-law, who sign to the charmer to follow the young man, and the business is done. In several districts, especially in the island of Ounamartch, the women serve as current coin, regulating sales and purchases. "Some one has brought in so many blue foxes, and so many sables, worth so many women." But be it understood that this kind of money is only conventional. To make a bargain and to pay the differences it is not necessary to have a troop of women behind you.

A word is sufficient to make a contract binding, and a word suffices to pronounce a divorce, the children following the mother or being adopted by their maternal uncle. The institution of matrimony has not been invented to cause these people any unpleasantness. Between man and wife there is little or no jealousy. As with many savages and half-civilised people, the man who would not offer his guest the hospitality of the conjugal couch, or the company of his best-looking daughter, would be considered an ill-bred person. It is quite the correct thing with them for the husbands to exchange wives, to borrow them, and to hire them out cheaply. At the time when the Russian Government granted their workmen only eight glasses of rum in the year, a man would give up his better half for a few drops of the divine liquor.

The head of a family gives the title of "mother" to his favourite wife, who styles not only her husband "father" but also her eldest son, and calls her own eldest daughter "mother."[1] This information suggests reflections which might lead far. But let us not raise a heavy superstructure upon so frail a foundation.

Monogamy is the rule, but with frequent exceptions. The men often risk death upon the sea. Widows and orphans are a serious charge when times are hard. The fisherman, returning with a full boat, is supposed to have his eye upon the girls who have lost their father, and to take pity on the widows who have very young infants. He will provide separate huts and several households. It is thus that polyandry works in concert with polygamy. But polygamy of this nature is more of a moral obligation than a pursuit of pleasure, and represents an amount of care which one must have a good heart to accept, and steadfastness to bear with day after day.

Moreover, these Hyperboreans see nothing shocking in an Aleutian woman declaring that one husband does not content her. Formerly a Florentine girl of good family, by a clause in the nuptial contract, claimed her right to take a lover whenever it should please her to do so. Likewise the Aleutian girls, enjoying during their spinsterhood a liberty of which they make free use, reserve, at their espousals, the right of having a *cicisbeo*. Their "adjutant,"[2] an official term, assists the master of the house in all his rights and duties, and liabilities, active and passive. He is supposed to contribute to the maintenance of the household and to the support of the children. Women so very much married are considered extremely fortunate, and enjoy a profound respect. The presence of the assistant is indispensable during the absence of the husband, who, on his return, patronises and protects the young man, expecting from him

[1] Venjaminof. [2] Bancroft, Venjaminof.

the deference which a younger brother owes to an elder one. The younger and the elder brother, that is precisely it. Indeed, among the Thlinkets and Koloshes, who are allied to the Aleutians, the attendant swain ought to be a brother, or at least a near relation of the master of the house.[1]

A Konyaga, caught in adultery, is obliged to pay a fine to the husband, in English fashion; but if he is a member of his family the husband may compel him to obey his orders and those of the wife, with whom henceforth the association is legitimate. On the death of the Thlinket before mentioned, his younger brother marries the widow, and the new captain requires in his lesser functions the good offices of the third brother.[2]

What do you think of it? Do we not hold here the key of the *cicisbeat*, that strange institution which we by no means explain when we condemn its immorality? The *cicisbeo* is a "levir"; his function is a survival from the fraternal polyandry of antiquity, of which traces are still discernible among the Esquimaux, and which may be studied from the life at Ladak, Thibet, Malabar, and in several other districts that have remained outside the highways of international communication.

Under these matrimonial conditions quarrels cannot be of frequent occurrence. However, difficult confinements are looked upon as the punishment for too loose a behaviour. The Aleutian husbands, the most easy going of men, have not the bad taste of their neighbours, the Korjaks, who, they say, compel their wives to make themselves uglier and dirtier than they are by nature[3] to scare away unlawful desires. But virtue so dearly purchased, virtue obtained at the price of disgust, is, it virtue at all? Widows and widowers seclude themselves for a period of about forty days. The widow, during her time of mourning, is considered unclean, and is shut up in a

[1] Erman. [2] Venjaminof. [3] Krascheninof.

special hut, where food is passed in to her, cut up in minute fragments, because she should not touch anything with her naked hand.[1] They are evidently afraid that the dead man, through his medium, has a hold over the living. A polygamist bequeaths the strictest mourning to the wife that has lived longest with him, and to her in whose proximity he happens to die.

We should prefer to stop here, but love of truth compels us to add that these primitive folk push their ignorance of evil to immorality; their truly extreme innocence is indistinguishable from vice. Be it noted that the witnesses for the prosecution are in everything else very favourable to this people, to whom they do not hesitate to accord admiration in more than one instance. Has a boy with a pretty face also a graceful demeanour? The mother no longer permits him to associate with companions of his own age, but clothes him and brings him up as a girl. Any stranger would be deceived as to his sex, and when he is about fifteen he is sold for a good round sum to a wealthy personage. "Choupans," or youths of this kind, are highly prized by the Konyagas.[2] On the other hand, there are to be met with here and there among the Esquimaux or kindred populations, especially in Youkon, girls who decline marriage and maternity. Changing their sex, so to speak, they live as boys, adopting masculine manners and customs; they hunt the stag, and in the chase shrink from no danger; in fishing, from no fatigue.

The pretty youths already alluded to willingly dedicate themselves to the priesthood, and when their first youth is past take orders, which thus cost them much less than others to obtain. From time immemorial there has been a marked affinity between the minion and the servant of the altars, between the prostitute and the pallacide. In the temples of the ancient East the vast and majestic

[1] Venjaminof. [2] Ross.

sanctuary appears to have been flanked by chapels decked with flowers, perfumed boudoirs, where there nestled on soft couches the Attys and the Eliakims, graceful and charming Adonises, awaiting the pleasure of the gods, that is to say, of their ministers, until, fully initiated into the sacred rites, they should become in their turn chiefs of the cult and keepers of the mysteries. The hierophant liked to be served by hierodules and bayaderes. Hetairism was born in the shadow of the altar. "Almost all mankind," says Herodotus,[1] "consort with women in their sacred edifices, with the exception of the Greeks and the Egyptians."

Except Greece? What then took place at Corinth? Except Egypt? What about Bubastis and Naucratis? What of the Aphrodite of Abydos, who bore the significant epithet *Porne?*[2] What of the royal princesses who took pride in the title of "pallakis" in the temple of Ammon? Juvenal went so far as to ask: What temple is there wherein the women have not prostituted themselves? At Jerusalem, Josiah destroyed in the temple of Jehovah the cells inhabited by the Sodomites[3] and the women who wove tents for Asherat.[4] It is known what excessive debauchery took place in the "groves" and "high places" of the "Great Goddess." The custom was so deeply rooted, that in the grotto of Bethlehem what was done formerly in the name of Adonis is done to-day in the name of the Virgin Mary, by Christian pilgrims; and the Mussulman *hadjis* do likewise in the sanctuaries of Mecca.[5] To the pagodas—"sinks of iniquity"—go the barren women, making a vow to abandon themselves to a given number of libertines; and others, to testify to the goddess

[1] *Euterpe.* [2] *Athenæus*, xiii. 5.

[3] The *Kedescheim.* Consult the Biblical Encyclopædias on this word. For instance, *Dizionario Ebreo:* Kadessa, *santa e meretrice;* Kadeschud, *postribolo e sacristia.*

[4] The symbol or image of Ashtoreth, 2 Kings xxiii. 7. See Soury, *La Religion d'Israël.*

[5] Sepp, *Heidenthum und Christenthum.*

of the place their veneration, prostitute themselves publicly, even at the doors of the holy place.[1] The priestesses of Juidah bring up the daughters of the highest families, and after severe trials, make them courtesans, proficient in the arts of pleasure.[2] In Borneo, the Dayak who becomes a priest, takes a female name and feminine garments, and marries simultaneously a man and a woman: the first to protect and accompany him in public, the second to divert him.[3]

But let us return to the Aleutians. As soon as ordination has been conferred upon the Levite, and the *choupan* has moulted into the *angakok*, the tribe confide to him the girls most suitable in bodily grace and in disposition; he has to complete their education—he will perfect them in dancing and other accomplishments, and finally will initiate them into the pleasures of love. If they display intelligence, they will become seers and medicine-women, priestesses and prophetesses. The summer kachims, which are closed to the women of the community, will open wide before these. It is believed that these girls would be unwholesome company if they had not been purified by commerce with a man of God. Worthy people! And yet it is asserted that they are not religious.

As religious as any other people, if not more so, the Inoits revere the spirits[4] of rocks and headlands, of glaciers, hummocks, and icebergs; they present their compliments to everything unknown or dangerous. Their Shamanism, or theory of magic, is identical in substance with the doctrine professed by the populations of northern Asia and America. It has been developed in the course of time with surprising exactitude; so much so that the institution of the *poulik*, *angakout*,[5] and *jossakids*, with the

[1] Dubois, *Mœurs de l'Inde.*

[2] Lindemann, *Geschichte der Meinungen.*

[3] Bishop of Labuan, *Transactions of the Ethnological Society*, ii.

[4] *Inoc.*

[5] *Angakok*, sorcerer, plural *Angakout.*

accompanying doctrines and traditions, forms the moral link between the tribes scattered over this immense territory.

Every one is not adapted for holy orders. To become an *angakok* it is needful to have a very marked vocation, and furthermore, a character and temperament which every one has not. The priests in office do not leave the recruiting of their pupils to chance; they make choice at an early age of boys or girls, not limiting themselves to one sex—a mark of greater intelligence than is exhibited by most other priesthoods. They have been known to address themselves to married couples of peculiar qualifications, and request of them a choice specimen to cultivate, even before its birth, by suitable education and special training. The father and mother of the future sorcerer will fast often and long, will seek certain foods and avoid others, will supplicate their ancestors to envelop the precious offspring with all care. As soon as it is born, the little creature will be sprinkled with urine, in order that it may be impregnated with the characteristic odour—it is decidedly their holy water. Elsewhere, the beard, tresses, and entire person of kings and sacrificial priests are anointed with oil taken from holy phials; and in other places they are buttered and smeared with dung, carefully spread out. Every one to his taste. The little one is required not to be like every one else, either in gesture or conduct; he is to proclaim himself as being moulded from other clay than are ordinary mortals, for he will have for his chief title: "He who has been set apart"[1]—*Sacer esto!* Disciplined by abstinence and prolonged vigils, by hardship and constraint, he must learn to endure pain stoically and to subdue his bodily desires, to make the body obey unmurmuringly the commands of the spirit.

Others may be chatterers; he will be silent, as becomes the prophet and the soothsayer. At an early age the

[1] Imaïnac, or Inguitsout: cf. The Nazarite Jew, and the Acts of the Apostles, xii. 2.

novice courts solitude. He wanders[1] throughout the long nights across silent plains filled with the chilly whiteness of the moon; he listens to the wind moaning over the desolate floes. In the open, advance machis and bosculis,[2] like a troop of white bears seeking adventures; he hears the grinding of teeth and the clattering of mighty paws. Over the black ocean, under a funereal sky, float blocks of ice, heavy with heaped-up snow; like huge diamonds swim the hummocks; and amongst them travel the enormous, dark masses of the bergs, with their transparent sea-green veins, and vague opaline gleams trembling around them; visions from beyond the tomb; a magnificence worthy of another planet, such perhaps as is seen in Uranus or Saturn. And then the aurora borealis, that ardently sought occasion for "drinking in the light,"[3] the *angakok* must absorb all its brilliancies and all its splendours. Mournful and rapt, seized with an ecstatic melancholy, the young man contemplates the glorious combats, the splendid battles in which the spirits engage in the aerial fields, when torrents of electricity flash across the incandescent heavens, when geysers of sparks overflow and fountains of colours gush out; the sky is streaked with spikes of flame and bloody darts, gleaming lances clash together in the heavens, the ether palpitates, and its pulsations are blazing flashes of light.

And now the future sorcerer is no longer a child. Many a time he has felt himself in the presence of Sidné, the Esquimaux Demeter; he has divined it by the shiver that ran through his veins, by the tingling of his flesh and the bristling of his hair; many a time he has distinguished her painful, long-drawn sighs, distant sounds, re-echoing like the bellowings of the whale, heard by the spirits, but mute for the vulgar ear. He sees stars unknown to the profane; he asks the secrets of destiny from Sirius, Algol,

[1] Similarly, the Polynesians call their priests *Haaropo*, or night-walkers (Moerenhout).

[2] Broken icebergs.

[3] Bastian.

and Altaïr; he divines what is thought by the Eagle, the Swan, and the Great Bear, who hearken unto the Inoits, and look down upon them, but remain silent. For these glorious stars speak only through their scintillations, and no one understands their language who has not their light within himself. He passes through a series of initiations, knowing well that his spirit will not be loosed from the burden of dense matter and crass ignorance, until the Moon has looked him in the face, and darted a certain ray into his eyes. At last his own Genius, evoked from the bottomless depths of existence, appears to him,[1] having scaled the immensity of the heavens, and climbed across the abysses of the ocean. White, wan, and solemn, the phantom will say to him: "Behold me! What dost thou desire?" Uniting himself with the Double from beyond the grave, the soul of the *angakok* flies upon the wings of the wind, and quitting the body at will, sails swift and light through the universe. It is permitted to probe all hidden things, to seek the knowledge of all mysteries, in order that they may be revealed to those who have remained mortal with spirit unrefined.

It is not the *angakok* ideal only to go through this education and discipline of the inner life; prophets and seers, ascetics and the inspired, all have sought God in the wilderness, and have taken refuge in the waste places—to talk with the Wolf there, say some, with the holy Angels think others; they have buried themselves in majestic silence to listen to the choral melodies of the stars, to distinguish the whirring of the atoms, the murmurs of a grain of sand, the sigh exhaled from a dewdrop before it ceases to be; ineffable harmonies drowned in the bustle of the street and market-place, and the uproar of battle. Our own soul escapes from us in the conflict of vanities, its inner motions are hidden from our perception, dulled by

[1] There is a similar belief among the Lapps, Red-skins, Kamtschadales. Charlevoix, *Journal.*

the deafening hurly-burly of paltry agitations. To recover oneself, the city must be fled, the crowd avoided. Until a man has discovered his conscience and questioned its oracle, he is, and can only be, a child. He understands nothing in this world, so long as he has not bent over his soul and sounded its gloomy depths, so long as he has not listened to the echoes of a thought ever duller as it falls from depth to depth, like a peal of thunder rolling to oblivion beyond other horizons.

But the lungs must have air to consume, stomachs need food to digest, intellects will have facts to elaborate, and realities to assimilate. The individual would fall into idiocy who should isolate himself for ever, should cease to converse with his fellows, and should interrupt the relations of action and reaction out of which existence is made up. For this reason the *angakok* will only absent himself from the community at intervals. He takes part in the hunting and fishing expeditions, exercises some craft, does not remain a stranger to public life, and follows or even directs popular movements, understanding them all the better that he is not engaged in the tumult of the action, that he stands aside, and looks on as from a height. According to his progress in his art, he becomes more original and eccentric. One can scarcely say whether he wakes or dreams, whether he is present or absent, wise or demented. He takes abstractions for realities and realities for abstractions, creates his own sympathies and antipathies. He sheds his soul in the bushes, but causes the rock to enter into the substance of his bones, and is one with the surrounding landscape. What pleases every one displeases this man, but he endures the unendurable; he has his own way of hearing and comprehending; he sees troubles where others see none, but when others discern them, all is smooth to him. His vision, veiled as regards the things of the present time, penetrates the translunar world; the secrets of eternity become familiar to him in

proportion to his neglect of the vulgarities of everyday life. Little by little he attains second sight, sees through exterior objects, and beyond the reflection which they cast upon his mind. It is thus that on the Brocken, the Witches' Mountain, the traveller sees his shadow spread upon the clouds, and outlined in space as a gigantic spectre. Fancy itself, extravagant illusions, cannot do otherwise than distort and transpose reality, decompose its elements, and recompose them in an incongruous fashion. Before indoctrinating the people the prophets have had to satiate themselves with phantasms, as the Bacchantes gorged themselves with noise, and intoxicated themselves with tumult. Before coming to land upon eternal truths, they were obliged to immerse themselves in illusion. Upon a metaphysic which is a mixture of ignorance and folly, they have constructed a vast and ingenious system, which makes aberration plausible, has method in madness, proves prodigy by miracle, sets forth absurdity with logic—all under the name of religion.

American *jossakis*, the *shamans* of Siberia, the *yogis* and *fakirs* of India, the dancing dervishes, the Bantou *engaka*, the Australian *piodjis*, ascetics and sorcerers *tutti quanti*, are brethren or cousins-german of these angakout. The object of their ambition is ecstasy, union with God, absorption into the infinite Spirit, into the Soul of the Universe—in short, the religious life. Manifestations of the miraculous all belong, in spite of diversity in detail, to the category of epilepsy or mania, and are connected with neurotic physiology, much studied, but still very obscure. Without pretending to explain their case, it is easy to perceive that these unfortunates have toiled to make an existence for themselves outside hygiene and common sense. To set themselves above nature they have outraged and irritated her; therefore do they suffer the penalty, and their existence is as miserable as it is abnormal. Despite their sleepy

appearance and apathetic physiognomy, they are sometimes singularly lucid and acute in their perceptions. The soul seems to be away, but they experience sensations of extraordinary delicacy, are carried away by inexplicable fits of force and vigour, and show sensibilities and insensibilities which pass belief. At the same time they believe in the persecutions of demons, who would come to worry and torment, and would even strangle them, did they not promise by a terrible oath to yield them obedience. In their prophetic frenzies they give themselves up to extravagant contortions and uncontrolled and convulsive movements, uttering howls which seem to have nothing human about them; a hoarse voice issues from a foaming mouth, the face is purple, the eyes bloodshot. Often they become blind in consequence of this congestion.[1] They pass through periods of almost inconceivable weariness and exhaustion; every nerve in their body is jaded, every tiniest fibre in their brain worn out.[2] Is there anything astonishing in their being sad and melancholy and inclined to gloomy thoughts? "Their physiognomy communicates a deep and painful impression to the mind."[3] It is noticed of them that they have an excessive fear of death; that they dread the sight of a corpse, but nevertheless have leanings towards thoughts of suicide. Hall gives the following account:—

"Jack's wife was rowing when she was seized with a fit, which I at first took for an epileptic attack. She burst into wild cries, customary, it seems, amongst those who practise sorcery. Immediately all redoubled their efforts. Her voice had a peculiar wail, her lips parted like crackers. The sailors replied in chorus. Her chant became every moment more vehement, ever increasing in its wildness, and at the same time she rowed on, displaying a superhuman vigour. On returning to the camp the performance was repeated

[1] Venjaminof, translated by Erman.
[2] Wrangell, *Observations*, etc.
[3] Hyacinthe, *Le Chamanisme en Chine.*

in the night. Jack recited a kind of liturgy, the women chanted, and the men uttered responses. This lasted several hours, and was repeated the next and following day."

He further remarks:—

"It was growing late. We were still chatting in our hut when a ringing cry burst forth. Swift as thought my Inoits leapt from their seats, seized the long knives that were lying about, and thrust them into a hiding-place. They had hardly resumed their seats when an *angakok* glided in, creeping through the narrow entrance. Dragging himself along on his knees, he groped before him, and all blinded by the shock of hair which fell over his eyes and face, he ransacked the food-safe. Not finding what he sought, he turned right round and went away without opening his lips.

"I asked them, 'Supposing he had found a knife?'

"'A knife? He would have stuck it into himself somewhere. They have these fancies. They are taken that way now and then.'"

When the novice has completely shaken off the old Adam, he makes his body the temple of some spirit,[1] or of several, for he can accommodate a legion of them. He calls upon the name of the Genius of his choice, and summons him to take up his abode with him. If he conjures him ten times without success, he renounces his trade, for without *tornac* there is neither prophecy nor miracle. That does not mean that all his time and trouble has gone for nought. His studies, and the severe discipline through which he has passed, will always win him respect and influence. This is how inspiration is obtained. The spirit invoked sends to meet his *protégé* a demoniac animal—polecat, otter, or badger[2]—that he may kill it, flay it, and clothe himself with its skin, thanks to which he obtains the power of "running wild" like our werewolves

[1] *Inoe, Tornac.*

[2] Concerning the badger, Japanese stories are quite as marvellous. Mitford, *Tales of Japan.*

and "versipelles." He will appropriate as a treasure the tongue of the beast, and will make it his "medicine," his personal "greegree." Evidently the choice of this organ is symbolical; it has been discovered, or remembered, that it is the instrument of the Logos, the manifestation of Reason. However, we do not wish to insinuate that these poor angakout have frequented the school of Alexandria.

Here is another method of initiation:—Following the advice given him by his elders, the Levite visits the cavern of an uninhabited island, in which the remains of a famous magician have been concealed. The prophet sleeps the sleep of death, but only sleeps. He sits, stiff and cold, his head masked. Clad in the magnificence of sacerdotal garb, the wings of a screech owl or of a great owl outspread above his cap, his robe fringed with ivory marmosets, big and little bells, tiny chains and rings, a whole *capharnaüm*, by means of which he is put in touch with the kings of the beasts, and the genii of the elements; eagles' claws, serpents' teeth, fishes' scales, pieces of hard leather, and various small objects which noisily knock together with each movement of the body. Between the knees is placed the drum, the indispensable drum,[1] a heaven in miniature, upon which the circle of the universe, the Cross of the Four Winds, and magic figures of men and animals are drawn; the interior contains little puppets—so many spirits, each of which responds to certain blows struck in a particular way. The adept sounds upon the instrument, addresses the seer himself, questions the august prophet. At the noise the corpse starts, the feathers flutter, the mask shakes. The living man has the courage to remove the dead man's mask; he uncovers the black, grimacing mummy, horrible and hideous; he looks at it, and is contemplated by it, the two hollow orbits cast upon him rays of darkness. The living salutes the dead by rubbing his nose against the nasal bone of the corpse, then passes his hand across

[1] *Boubene*, etc.

his stomach, as much as to say, "How delightful!" In an excess of politeness, he spits in his palms[1] and smears the countenance of the great man with saliva; afterwards he makes an offering of tobacco, sufficient for one or two pipes, and perhaps also the liver of a bear, which kills dogs and poisons men, smiting them both in body and mind. At the sight of these delicacies the parchment lips feebly smile, the little sticks fixed in the top of the skull shake from side to side; tokens that he is well received. By the uncertain light of some moss soaked in a shell full of oil, master and disciple converse the night through. The disciple interrogates, and the master replies by phosphorescent writings in the brain; if the question be brief and clear, the response is luminous, but hesitancy only receives shady oracles. It is thus that the spirit of the doctor passes into the young man; the transfusion is marked by the transference of a tooth which the successor extracts from the august jaw, and immediately conceals in his own mouth. If one of the vulgar happened but to see this tooth, or if he caught a glimpse of the tongue of the mysterious otter, he would immediately fall down smitten with madness. A similar chastisement befell the profane man who might chance to see the jasper cup of the Grail, in which St. Joseph of Arimathea had collected the drops of the Holy Blood.

But why should it be the tooth of the old sorcerer more than anything else?

On this point we can only offer conjectures. The tooth is the most durable portion of the organism; it has been found among the ashes at the stake when the bones had completely disappeared, and it is considered by many primitive men to be a seat of life. The power of birds of prey lies in the beak, which, by natural philosophers, has been likened to a pair of cephalic arms. Molars of victims slain in war or chase made the most magnificent necklace that the hero

[1] Choriz, *Kotzebue Expedition.*

of former times could offer to his fair. The viper concentrates its life and its anger in its fangs, pouring through them the essence of its chyle and its humours; why should not man do the same? Has not the sorcerer also a venomous tooth?

Other things are related no less astonishing. The sorcerers would change their sex at will, pluck out an eye and swallow it afterwards, and thrust a knife into their breasts without doing themselves any harm.[1] In this manner they pass through death, which they believe themselves with the utmost seriousness to have already done several times under the most heroic conditions, or rather the most far-fetched, if we may say so. They go to the sea-shore and summon a bear or a walrus, or in preference the Great Whale, which they compel, by their incantations, to open huge jaws into which they fling themselves. The orc coasts along many shores, visits numerous islands, then plunges into the gulf that leads to the Boreal Paradise, where they will contemplate at their leisure the mysteries of the other world. How long they remain there they themselves do not know, for the measurement of time is one thing below and another above. During this sojourn they acquire extraordinary faculties and a transcendent intelligence; they are transformed from the caterpillar into the butterfly. When they have learned enough, the whale casts them up upon the shore like other Jonahs.

All the initiations being accomplished, the education done and perfected, the magician takes the name of *angakok*, which signifies "the Great" or "the Ancient," and offers himself to the people as guide and instructor. Debarred from all official power, he is, however, consulted on every important occasion, and his advice is always followed. Every one might defy him, and would have the right to contradict him, but no one dares or cares to do it. Special attribute he has none, but he accumulates in himself

[1] Krause, *Geographische Blætter.*

all sorts of influences. He is public counsellor, justice of the peace, universal authority, arbitrator in public and private affairs, artist of all kinds, poet, actor, buffoon. Having the reputation of both genius and madman, his intellect is supposed at the very least to be tempered in divine sources and to be in communication with the superior powers. He understands every one, no one pretends to fathom him. After all is said and done, his power is that of a superior mind over obtuse ones; his secret is that of Leonora Galigaï: the ascendency of a strong over a weak will. It suffices for him to be superior, incontestably superior, for those round about him to invest him with omnipotence. He is a physician, inasmuch as he is priest and thaumaturgist, and inasmuch as he has many demons in his brain, heart, liver, and loins. He has to play the part of "Great Provider" to the people, to lure the game of land and sea to the pitchfork and spear; he has to set going the "stone,"[1] a gift from the ocean, thanks to which whale, salmon, and pike rush to impale themselves upon the harpoon; he has to wear a girdle of grasses interwoven with knots, which assures victory at every juncture; he has to assist the moon when in labour. During total eclipses the poor moon loses her head completely. She wanders through the heavens, missing her way amid the rocks and quagmires; but then her friend, the *angakok*, hails her, cries aloud the path she ought to take in order that she may find her way again, and sings hymns to renew her courage.[2] Against the evil genii he goes to war mailed in formulas, armed with divers charms, such as the beaks of crows, the incisors of foxes, the claws of bears, and, if possible, some trinket out of old European stores. To chase away the demon of ill-health, and to keep wandering souls at a distance, he executes violent movements and contortions, and leaps across a huge roaring fire. Death he will meet with dreadful blows of a club, and put him to flight.[3]

[1] *Tchimkieh.* [2] Venjaminof. [3] Hyacinthe.

In Esquimaux land there is, as amongst us, black magic and white, the good sorcerer and the bad. The bad ones take advantage of their acquaintance with the undesirable dead, and with spirits destitute of compassion, in order that they may save malevolent designs and individual rancours, and perpetrate ill-natured acts.

The vile multitude, in the other world as in this, do neither great good nor great evil, and make themselves evident only by a slight whizzing. The more robust make ears tingle, asking in this way for something to eat; but those most to be dreaded "return" under a bodily form; and the most dangerous, the mad or witless, when alive, have exercised the office of *angakok*, and have died violent deaths. Spiritual doctors over yonder recommend assassins, as soon as the murder is committed, to tear out the liver, as being the seat of strength and life, and to devour it still palpitating, as a means of escaping the reprisals of the victim, who would otherwise struggle furiously, and would enter into the body of the murderer, causing him to turn demon.

A great dodge, practised in many parts of the world by people who want to bewitch some one, is to carry off some food which the person to be injured has begun to eat, and to shut it up in a tomb, so that the dead by gnawing at it in his turn, may be put in communication with the person betrayed, and so devour his substance. Hence the name given to one who casts a spell, "He who causes to waste away."[1] The worker of misfortune enters also into relations with the evil moon, the moon on the wane, which has the specialty of drawing to her the entrails of immoderate laughers. Hecate's victims act as vampires towards the living, and suck their viscera and vital organs; they transform themselves into spiders, visible to the *angakok*, which

[1] *Kowsouinak, Ilisĥtsot*, plural *Ilisĥtsouk*.

exhales their poisonous breath into the intestines, and thrust therein long claws black and hooked.

The bewitched person, if he has strength enough, goes to the door of the soothsaying sorcerer, and cries, "Ho! ho! you are wanted!" The man of skill does not reply at once, but lets the call be repeated; by the voice and accent of the invalid he guesses the malady, and even who has sent it to him. For there is no illness which is not provoked by the hatred of some one living, or the pestilential breath of some angry dead person; the fracture of a limb even is attributed to a malevolent spirit. The *angakok*, being a well-intentioned sorcerer, defends his people from the multitudinous inroads of the demons, that take the form of cancers, rheumatism, paralysis, and, above all, cutaneous diseases which civilised man attributes to uncleanliness. He disperses the accursed brood, pursues the ignoble mob, exorcises the sick man, cleanses him with sprinklings of stale urine, like the Bochiman *poison-doctors*.[1] The Cambodians in the same way sprinkle the small-pox demon with urine, only it is that of a white horse.[2] And, without going so far as the extreme East, the Slavonic rustics shake over their cattle some of the herbs of St. John, boiled in urine, to keep them from bad luck. Our French peasant-women used to wash their hands in their urine, or in that of their husbands and children, to avert enchantments or to prevent their taking effect. Judge Paschasius caused the blessed Saint Lucy to be watered with this liquid because he thought she was a witch.[3] When a diagnosis puzzles an *angakok* he has recourse to a truly ingenious proceeding. He fastens to the invalid's head a string, the other end of which is attached to a stick; this he raises, feels, balances on his hand, and

[1] Th. Halm, *Globus*, xviii.
[2] Landas, *Superstitions Annamites.*
[3] Thiers, *Des Superstitions.*

turns in every direction. Various operations follow, having for their object the forcible removal of the spider from the luckless wretch whose flesh it devours. He will cleanse and set to rights as much as he is able—whence his name, "Mender of souls."

A wicked witch, present though invisible, can undo the efforts of the conjurer, and even communicate to him the disease, rendering him the victim of his devotion; black magic can display more power than white magic. Then seeing the case to be desperate, the honest *angakok* summons, if possible, one or more brethren, and the physicians of souls strive in concert to comfort the dying man; with a solemn voice they extol the felicities of Paradise, chanting softly a farewell canticle which they accompany lightly upon the drum.

In the *Kousouinek*, pursued by the hatred of the *angakout*, it is possible to see the priests of a former religion degraded into evil sorcerers. The *angakout* themselves are always represented as being instruments of Satan by the missionaries of the Greek, Lutheran, and other churches, who affirm of certain knowledge that Tornansouk, the Esquimaux God, is no other than the Lord of Hell.

Throughout winter the Aleutians are not always hunting the bear and the fox, or surprising the poor seal when he puts his nose out of his hole to breathe; they cannot be always constructing boats and making sledges or snow-shoes. Life would be unendurable if they did not give themselves some little rest. The hovel being poor and miserable, there is all the more reason for being gay. The Esquimaux laughs at everything: laughs at the white man with his hundred tools and his thousand knick-knacks; he laughs while thawing his nose and hands, which are in danger of gangrene; he laughs while letting oil run down his throat, while greasing his skin, and while lubricating his garments within and without; he laughs, and asks nothing but laughter. The

Inoits have few pleasures but those of society, and of these they do not deprive themselves. The climate being hostile, the earth a harsh step-mother, they feel the need of keeping close together, of helping one another, of loving one another. What the outer world refuses them they ask from the inner. After all, there is for man no better companion than man; it is in consorting with his fellows that he develops his original qualities and his highest faculties. Were it not that the Esquimaux tribes are great families, closely united, were there not communism thorough and deep rooted, their little republics would have speedily perished. Indeed they do not yet understand anything of the glorious principle, "Every one for himself," or of the eternal truths of Supply and Demand. They have not inclined their ears to the suave "harmonies" of rent and capital, as modulated on the lyre of Bastiat.

The Aleutians begin their festivities in November, and continue them until the end of January. From village to village they invite one another to Pantagruelian banquets. These people, who so often fast, know no happiness superior to that of junketing, and gorging themselves with oil, and with raw and bloody meat. In the intervals, the youths engage in trials of strength and contests of agility; the grown-up men and the old folk play at several kinds of games with ivory figures representing ducks, gulls, penguins, and other birds; they quickly learn to play chess, draughts, and dominoes. The events of the day are discussed, the tribunal of public opinion takes cognisance of any infractions of good manners and customs. Severity is rare, but it is said that madmen and criminal sorcerers have been executed. There have been a few instances of murder, on which occasions the nearest relative avenged the victim. But if the retaliation brought about fresh retaliation, several villages called up the affair and the chief men pronounced sentence. It is but in the very rarest and most exceptional

cases that the permanent jury intervenes, save to adjust differences and explain misunderstandings. Discussions are promptly turned aside, the community being perfectly aware that in the incessant struggle with a hostile Nature, it can only exist through the good-will of all towards each.

However, affairs cannot always settle themselves, and wrongs may be deep. For fear that suppressed vexations might embitter the character, it is agreed that they should be made public, and be duly set forth. The offended person gives notice that on such a day he will give a certain comrade a piece of his mind: a poetical struggle will take place between the adversaries. Bertrand de Born prepares his *sirvente*, and Bertrand de Ventadour his *canzone;* they will sing their satirical composition, declaim, act, dance it, assisted by seconds duly prepared, who, at need, will replace them; these will play an accompaniment to the refrains, and put in effective taps on the drum. The assembly listens attentively, expressing approval by applauding and condemnation by grumbling, being quite assured that honesty and artistic merit hunt in couples; convinced that a good conscience lends a passion, energy, and loftiness of diction to which ill faith can never attain. On closer examination we find it to be an ordeal, decidedly more humane and reasonable than "judgments of God" by red-hot iron, molten lead, water test, poison-swallowings, or sacred victims. A similar custom is not unknown in Upper Bavaria, where the feast of many a patron saint is enlivened by two cocks of the village challenging each other to a *gsangl.* The Sakalaves of Madagascar also have their *zibé.*

The guilty Inoit who does not feel his cause to be a good one, asks, before the encounter takes place, to be reconciled with his adversary, to whom he sends an ambassador clothed in new red flannel, and bearing, as his badge of office, a stick decorated with feathers, to inquire

what reparation is exacted. Whatever it may be, the offender makes it a point of honour to offer more. "Thou hast demanded a packet of tobacco; here it is. Take also this fur, this blanket, and this sealskin as well." All of which the other accepts merely to distribute them among the witnesses of the reconciliation. The new friends exchange their garments, take each other by the hand, and lead off a dance, in which every one else joins.

However, all the Hyperboreans do not find a vent for their anger in songs, nor for their bad temper in verses and dances: there ensues no longer a poetic contest, but a vulgar duel; the combatants are no longer troubadours, but instead mere knights. For instance, the Thlinkets and Koloches settle their differences in a strange kind of combat: they pad themselves with bearskins, stuffed with moss to increase their thickness; put on cuirasses made of little pieces of dried wood fastened together, and wear on their heads wooden helmets, upon which is emblazoned the family coat-of-arms. Thus accoutred, they contend for a length of time with knives, and to add to the solemnity of the occasion, the seconds accompany the assault-at-arms with a soft and sentimental ditty. The boxing tournaments are not so imposing: the champions are seated face to face; one strikes and the other returns the compliment, waiting a minute between each blow, so as to allow it to be relished, and to give it its full effect. They take their time over the affair, and it goes on until one of the combatants declares himself satisfied,[1] or until the lookers-on have had enough of it. The best of things must come to an end.

The Inoits have not broken up their art into poetry, dancing, and music, as we have; it is as if they scarcely distinguish it from their religion, or from that which we call by that name. For their religion, purely instinctive, has little resemblance to our abstract theologies, so closely bound

[1] Richardson, *Polar Regions.*

up with metaphysics. Primitive folk have not cut their being into two portions; their everyday life is intermingled with and wholly saturated by their religious life, so that their religion, on the contrary, is indissolubly linked with the strong realities of their daily existence. French bishops but lately excommunicated the male and female opera dancers, and refused them sepulture in consecrated ground; they would denounce as a sacrilege the dancing of another David before the Host.[1] But an Aleutian can conceive of no other method of adoring his Tornarsouc than by the nimble movements of his legs. What poetry is to prose, dancing is to motion. Both rhythmic movements emanate from intelligence and passion. It is less easy to lie with the eyes and by gesture than with the tongue and lips. Gesture, being much more the immediate expression of sentiment, precedes articulate language; whence the importance of dancing and pantomime among savages.

Dancing, harmonised gesture in which the whole body participates, is the supreme art and language of primitive men. The Aleutian, more sensitive and imaginative than logical and reasoning, chooses to reproduce by physical movements what agitates his soul, his joys, and griefs, his hopes and fears; he passes from the sacred to the profane, from the pathetic to the grotesque, from the sublime to the ridiculous, winding up by a burlesque. In short, every artist takes pleasure in running the entire course, in playing upon the whole gamut of sentiment, even satirising the beings he most fears and the things he best loves.

Let us describe the feast given to the Malemutes of Chaktolik by the Malemutes of Ounahlaklik.

An entire village had been invited by another village, each family having its guests, who were treated to the best.

Fourteen actors, dancers of repute, furnished the chief entertainment of the first evening. They came out of the

[1] 2 Samuel vi. 14.

subterranean passage, and arranged themselves in two lines of eight and six, facing one another. The actors, naked to the girdle, wore diadems set with large feathers that fell down upon their shoulders; with the tails of wolves or foxes dangling at their backs, embroidered gloves, and boots embellished with many-coloured furs. The ladies had clothed themselves in a tightly-fitting garment of white reindeer skin, and over that a tunic made in some cases of seal's intestines, fine and lustrous as collodion, in others of fish membranes, like transparent silk, spangled with silver. The Aleutian beauties have no need to learn that semi-nudity displays advantageously what it pretends to conceal. Their garments are adorned with embroideries and coloured glass beads; among their tresses are interwoven bands shining with mother-of-pearl; they wear gloves made of skin white as snow, having fur around the wrists; in their hands they wave a long plume plucked from the eagle or swan.

See! here are the old men following as chorus. They take their places with their drums, and begin the overture; it is an old-fashioned aria, grave and in regular time, slow and monotonous; the modern airs are lighter and more frivolous. The minuet—for it is a minuet—deserves admiration from connoisseurs for its rhythmic precision, the accuracy of the dancers, and the modest grace of the women, who glide over the ground waving their feathers. Then follows a ballet, *The Lucky Hunter*, played by two persons. A bird hops in, shakes its tail, drinks, and bathes itself, plumes its feathers, pecks about here and there. The archer espies it and draws near with stealthy steps. One of his movements startles the little creature, and it takes to flight. But an arrow whizzes and strikes it on the wing. Bracing itself against the pain, the wounded bird flutters along in wild zigzag, until it finally falls into some brushwood. With broken wing it turns upon the enemy, striking and tearing with beak and claws, until, exhausted from

loss of blood, it sinks down and yields, letting drop its plumage. . . . Wonderful! it is a naked woman, a trembling, palpitating woman, whom the young hunter, intoxicated with joy, embraces fervently.

Of what does this remind you? Is it not a translation into Aleutian of the apologue of Eros—of Eros who let fly his golden arrow at Aphrodite's charming dove? The Dindjies tell how the White Pullet changed herself into a woman to become the companion of man.[1] The Indians have likewise the legend concerning Osseo, who, whilst walking in the Evening Star, shot at a warbler; the bird fell, and was found to be a girl, with a bloody arrow in her ivory bosom.[2] The Russian Mikaïlof Ivanovitch Potok pursued a cygnet and shot at it. "White feathers fell away, also a mantle, the fairest of maidens appeared to his view."[3] "I am the falcon, thou art the ring-dove," is the everlasting song of lovers in popular poetry.

By degrees the spectators grow excited, and gesticulate an accompaniment. Ballads are composed describing contemporaneous events, battles and treaties of peace, hunting adventures, incidents of travel, and boat accidents;[4] the enthusiasm increasing with the shouts of applause.

But there is no real festival without a banquet. Issuing as if from underground, children, very finely attired, walk in step, with perfect seriousness, carrying dishes of boiled fish, meats, great goblets of oil, reindeer's marrow, and, by way of desert, bilberries mixed with grease and snow. The guests invited to the solemnity consume such a quantity of provisions that very often the feast is followed by an actual famine, but that confers all the more honour on it. The better to aid digestion all join then in dancing, after which every one is treated to a pinch of snuff.[5]

[1] Petitot, *Monographie des Dènè Dindjié.*
[2] Schoolcraft, *Algic Researches.*
[3] Bistrom, *Das Russische Volksepos.*
[4] Venjaminof. [5] Dall.

The New Year solemnities are not always celebrated by both sexes together; sometimes the men and women make separate feasts, curiosity and indiscretion being punished by death.

They meet together in the night-time to dance by the light of the moon, taking off their garments, even in several degrees of frost. Nudity is the sacred garb with which man clothes himself to approach the Divinity. When it freezes hard enough to split stones, there is no slackening of the steps, and the gesticulation becomes more emphatic. Above these naked bodies are spectral faces. An eyeless mask, kept in its place by a strap buckled behind the head and a bit between the teeth, prevents them seeing further than one or two steps beyond their feet. It is used but once; after the solemnity it is broken to pieces. As long as it is on, the wearer is under the influence of the Spirit which he represents; a terrible genius, whose glance is death, and for that reason he takes care to cover his eyes.

This is how they celebrate a Love-Feast or Holy Communion. The young people whitewash themselves, and put on coloured garments. Marching in single file, they make a collection from every family, and carry off from each house at least one dish. In the *kajim*, decorated for the occasion, the orchestra performs a monotonous recitative, which is accompanied by those present. The collectors arrive chanting and piping too. They raise their dishes above their heads, and present them to the cardinal points, beginning at the north. The Four Winds are invited by the *angakok*, who implores their goodwill.

The next day, men and women go out of doors, and take their places in a circle around a pitcher of water and a great number of dishes. Without uttering a word, they take a bit here and a mouthful there, thinking all the while of Sidné, and praying for her protection. Each one dips his finger in the jar and swallows a drop, without ceasing to

invoke Sidné, and to murmur his own name and the place and time of his birth. After this each one offers every one else something to eat, under the conviction that he who displays the most generosity will obtain the greatest favours from Sidné.[1]

But who is Sidné?

Sidné,[2] the mother of the Esquimaux and of mankind, appears, upon a final analysis, to be the Earth, genitrix of all animals, both beasts and men. Before the relatively modern institution of paternity, that of maternity existed; it was the first idea that germinated in the brain, at least in that of viviparous species. Just as the child makes for itself a doll, so our species in its development created for itself a fanciful world, an image and reflection of the real world, such as they conceived it to be, and this they imagined as being dominated by a mother, a Cybele. Sidné has not yet been dethroned; neither ungrateful son nor ambitious husband has set her aside. These poor Hyperboreans are still so much behindhand.

All these peoples celebrate their Eleusinian mysteries at the new year. The ceremonies closely resemble the masquerades of the Ahts and the Moquis; the Feasts of the Bison, popular among the Mandanes and other Red-skins; and the Rogations of hunting, to celebrate the opening of a new season, still observed by the tribes along the banks of the Amazon,[3] and which Christianity with difficulty abolished among the Teuton[4] and Anglo-Saxon races.

On the longest night of the year, two *angakout*, of whom one is disguised as a woman, go from hut to hut extinguishing all the lights, rekindling them from a vestal flame, and crying out—"From the new sun cometh a new light."

And indeed every spring brings forth its own generation

[1] Hall.
[2] Also called *Arnarkouagsak*.
[3] Spix und Martius, Bates.
[4] Adalbert Kühn.

of vegetable and animal life. However, all suns, fires, and lights have not the same virtue; there are periods of dearth or abundance, fruitful or barren seasons. Would man remedy this inequality, and change the course of things? He takes it into his head to modify the moon and recast the sun. Out of this desire sprang religion-mongering, for religions, one and all, set themselves to favour production with great profit to consumption.

Oriental doctors teach that in the night between the old and new year, Heaven pours out three drops into the elements. The first falls into the air, to revive the creative power in it; the second falls into the water, and thence will pass through the veins of animals, exciting them to love; the third falls upon the earth, and will cause the plants to put forth.[1]

That is all very well! say the Hyperboreans, but we are going to give the details of the matter.

At the beginning of the new year, old Mother Gigogne, who lives at the pole, ascends from her smoky hovel at the bottom of the sea, seats herself in front of a hut facing the south, and taking her ease, sneezes and sniffs, whilst inhaling the fresh air. Refreshed and reinvigorated, she fetches her great lamp, trims it, pours in oil, more and more until it overflows, and then she lights it. The oil blazes up; the sparks and burning drops, on coming in contact with the sun, turn into breathing creatures, verdant plants and budding flowers. The Great Mother sprinkles the air, which is filled with the rustling of birds on the wing. The Great Mother sprinkles the waters, and the fish disport themselves. When the old lady is in a good humour, she amuses herself by playing at making it rain melted fat. In her capacity of Mother Plenty she makes all living things fruitful, but when she comes as Stingy Face, vile Stingy Face, all must pinch and pine. But wherefore such dissimilarity of behaviour?

[1] Bastian, *Voelker Psychologie.*

It depends on whether the hag is in a good or bad humour; she is in a bad humour when the lice and other acari prick her and make her cross. It is the business of the *angakout* to foresee this, and when they pay her their customary visit, to make her merry with some scrap of gossip whilst they are cleansing her tresses.[1]

This mythical theme lends itself to innumerable variations. Take, for example, that of the Tchuktchis.

"The festival had been long since expected by the school of the *angakout* prophets, who brought[2] the idols on visits from island to island and from village to village. To render themselves the more accessible to spiritual influences, the old shamans prepared themselves by long fasts, the members of their families having eaten nothing since the day before, having even made themselves vomit. On the day of the solemnity, the great hall of the *kajim*, illuminated by many lamps, is crowded with lads wrapped in fantastic frippery, wearing hats of wood or rushes, shaped as beaks, jowls, muzzles, and jaws. They imitate the cries and movements of the beasts they represent. After a magnificent hubbub, they hang up on cords about a hundred bladders, taken from animals that have all been slain by arrows. Four birds carved in wood—two partridges, a sea-gull, and an osprey; the last-named has a human head—are articulated like puppets. The strings are pulled, and the osprey shakes its head, the sea-gull snaps its beak as if seizing a fish, and the partridges flap their wings. In the centre of the building, a stake, covered with greenery, personifies Jug Jak, the Spirit of the Sea.[3] At every new dance, reeds and leaves are set on fire before the birds and bladders. In the last act victuals, previously offered to the Four Winds and

[1] Rink.

[2] Cf. the Roman *Lectisternia*, the courtesies exchanged by the patrons and patronesses of churches, towns, and convents in the Middle Ages.

[3] Zagoskine, *Annales des Voyages*, 1850.

then to the God of the Clouds, are handed over to the assembly, who do not stint themselves."[1]

Is it necessary to explain that the bladders, warmed by the flames, symbolise the breezes of springtide that vivify birds and fish, the forest, and all that dwells therein; that they are emblems of the spirit of life, which enters into the nostrils?[2] Have we not read in our mythologies how Flora is awakened by Zephyrus?

At their *Coleda* the Servians set fire to an oak log, sprinkle it with wine, strike it, causing the sparks to fly out, and cry, "So many sparks, so many goats and sheep! So many sparks, so many pigs and calves! So many sparks, so many successes and blessings!"[3]

We have before us an engraving,[4] representing an Anglo-Saxon festival in the time of Hengist and Horsa. Therein are to be found the essential elements of the Esquimaux ceremony. People are dancing round a flaming billet, the *Yule log*, above which pigs are roasting for the subsequent feast. Hertha, with two boys by her side disguised as crows with large beaks, arrives in a car drawn by stout, lusty fellows disguised as bears. A procession follows—wolves, boars, foxes, stags, heartily welcomed by the hunters; hypocras and hydromel flow freely. From these festivals to our carnivals and the masquerades of the Middle Ages transition is easy.

Now to describe the Kolioutche variety:

Those officiating enter, and announce themselves as hunters and game. The first are quite naked, but armed with copper daggers with gleaming blades; the others are attired as seals with shining, spotted skins, as fishes and winged fowls and as wolves and dogs proudly crested. They walk round a great fire kindled in the midst of the hall. Mice and birds

[1] Hall. [2] Cf. Isa. ii. 22; Job xxvii. 3.
[3] Schwenck, *Mythologie der Slaven.*
[4] After a picture by Corbould.

carefully stuffed are suspended by strings.[1] Then arises a soft slow cantilena—

"*Hi yangah yangeh,*
Ha ha yangah,"[2]

repeated over and over again, which seems to come from the depths of space, draws near, quickens, and swells into thunder-peals, then stops abruptly. A curtain rises. A shaman appears with floating hair, his face masked to represent a beast's muzzle; he wears a cloak adorned with strange trinkets and fantastic gewgaws. He gravely proceeds towards the hearth, the spectators respectfully making room for him; he crosses the circle of singers and hunters, and contemplates the flame for a long time with his eyeless mask. Suddenly he begins to run in the direction of the sun. The hunters greet him with savage cries, brandishing their daggers, and rush in pursuit of him like a pack of hounds. The shaman is off, swift as the wind. He has an intuitive perception of the blows struck at him, and avoids them with an agility worthy of admiration; his mask does not prevent his turning and tacking, his leaping to the right and bounding to the left. Whilst in flight he seizes a firebrand, which, on being thrown up to the roof, falls back upon the ground and emits a shower of live sparks.

What does this mean?

That, surrounded as it is by its persecutors, the quarry forgets its danger to reproduce its species, an exploit which all the spectators greet with acclamation. It is not enough to kill the prey, it must also reproduce itself, so that its race may not die out. Thus, when the Esquimaux bring down a reindeer, they take care to wrap round with moss a fragment of some important organ, and place it reverentially under a stone, or they bury it under a clod at the very spot where the beast fell. And when they capture a seal, on cutting it open,

[1] Wrangell, *Observations.* [2] Hooper's *Tuski.*

they throw some drops on its head, doubtless that the soul may take refuge in water which will in time find its way to the sea, the fount of life. Be that as it may, the applause is but little use to the fugitive; his persecutors harass him, gain ground, tread on his heels, graze him with their daggers. Finally they cast a noose round his legs, throw him down, bind his limbs, wrap him in a blanket, and drag him behind the curtain. Blades are heard clashing, some stifled groans, and then all is silent.

New acts, fresh hunting scenes. Every time some other kind of quarry is put on the stage. Despite its agility, despite its cunning, it cannot escape the fatal blow; and always, before falling, each beast provides for the continuation of its species. A potful of blazing oil or grease illuminates the entire hall.

At the end of the mystery, when the last actor—a priest—has just been struck down, advantage is taken of his impending death to get advice from beyond the grave concerning current affairs. It should be understood that the masks are haunted by the Genius of the man or animal which each represents. According to the number of masks is the number of gods. The hideous representation of the divine personage whom it is desired to consult is laid upon the face of the shaman that moment killed: he shudders, his limbs are convulsed. The spirit enters into him. Quickly he is questioned, quickly he replies, but in an indistinct voice, in ambiguous and incoherent words. Never was sibylline oracle more mysterious!

It was not absolutely indispensable that the *angakok* should die in order to serve as a medium between two worlds, since his body always serves as a receptacle for one or more ghosts. On private matters the sorcerers are consulted in a hut; they are laid, with hands tied behind their backs, and their heads between their legs, beside a drum, and a stretched skin; then the lights are put out, and all go away, closing the door behind them.

After some time the captive drummer is heard invoking his Genius, whose approach is indicated by phosphorescent flashes and certain sounds from the dry, outstretched skin. A conversation begins, seeming questions and answers are heard by those without. When they re-enter with lights no one is there; both prophet and divinity have disappeared by the chimney. Inoits and Red-skins believe strongly in this performance, of which the trick is possibly that done by the Davenport brothers in their celebrated cabinet.

Evidently the actors in the drama described have only received pretended thrusts of the knife. The Ahts, less easily satisfied, wish to see the weapon ensanguined, and would like to put a finger in the wound like the Apostle Thomas. However, they do not exact that the actor should die before their eyes; they permit him to be bandaged and carried away, provided that he does not reappear for some time.

Let us insist upon the fact that these plays are above all, and from one end to the other, the work of magic. The sorcerer "runs wild," masks himself with jowl, beak, or jaws, to put himself in touch with the animals he delivers up to the hunter. The brazier, the central point of these ceremonies, symbolises the lamp of the Great Mother, Sidné. It is the sun, source of all motion, whose rays are so many living spirits and elements of generation. These Inoits would understand the country folk of Switzerland and Germany lighting their Easter fires, throwing incandescent discs into the air, and rolling a fiery wheel down a steep hill. At their Feast of Sada the Persians too, upon every summit, set on fire heaps of faggots, into which the king, grandees, and eminent persons throw animals, with wisps of dried grass fastened to their tails or paws. The wretched creatures fled away, carrying the fire over hill and dale.[1] A brutal and ferocious symbol of a grand fact. The Bible tells of the prank of the

[1] Hyde, *Veterum Persarum Religionis Historia.*

hero who let loose among the standing corn a number of foxes that he had tied two and two with firebrands between their tails; a legend of Moloch worship, in which the fox with its ruddy hair evidently signifies the heat of summer, also personified by Samson himself—Shemesh or the Sun. For a long while in the good town of Paris, in the presence of the sovereign and royal family, in the Place Saint-Jacques, the magistrates kindled a stack of wood wherein perished hens and cats. A similar practice is perhaps not quite obsolete in Upper Dauphiné.

"Of all the festivals which I have witnessed," says Lucian of Samosata,[1] "the most solemn is that which is celebrated at Hieropolis at the commencement of spring. They cut down great trees, which they set up in the court of the temple. Thither are brought goats, sheep, and other living animals, which they hang upon the trees. The interior of the pyre is filled with birds, clothing, and objects of gold and silver. From Syria and all the countries round about, a great multitude hasten to this festival, called by some the 'Pyre' and by others the 'Lamp.'" Indeed, there is more unity than diversity amongst men.

This leads us on to speak of the whalers, a corporation which constituted the glory of the Kadiak and Aleutian peoples before the Russian invasion.

The Romans assembled their bridge builders in a sacerdotal college; the Chewsures of the Caucasus have their priestly brewers; the Todas of the Neilgherries their divine cheese-makers; our friends the Aleutians, the Koniagas, and others, have their whalers. Only those individuals entered the fraternity who had passed through a severe probation, and who had been initiated in the traditions and legends of the mighty cetacean, the true god of these shores. Above all, an exceptional skill and strength was demanded of them. On more than one occasion, one of

[1] De Deâ Syrâ.

these men in a little boat made of sealskin, went forth alone, to encounter the enormous creature. He attacked it with a lance, his only weapon, and succeeded finally in killing it,[1] say the natives, but we suspect that they are telling a magic exploit. This personage used, we are told, to throw a weighted dart at the whale, and then to shut himself up in an isolated hut, where he spent three times twenty-four hours without food or drink. He imitated from time to time the groaning (?) of the wounded whale, thinking thus to ensure its death, and on the fourth day he went back to the sea. If he then found the creature dead, he made haste to take out the dart, and with it to cut away the part wounded by the weapon, lest his magic should prejudice those who were going to eat of it. If the whale still swam about, some mistake must have been made, and he returned to his hut to recommence the incantation.[2]

This privileged caste formed a nursery of the gods; its members enjoyed a supernatural fame, at least whilst the hunting season lasted. At that time no one might taste their food, impregnated as it was with magic virtues, none might draw near their persons, nor even dare to look at their oars.

But although divine, they were not immortal. Upon their decease, their brethren cut up the corpse into as many pieces as there were individuals; each rubbed with the point of his favourite harpoon the fat, keeping it afterwards as a kind of talisman. Others laid in a hiding-place the disembowelled body, from which all fatty matter had been removed, and which had been washed in running water. On the eve of an expedition, the comrades visited their *Campo Santo*, sprinkled the corpses, and sponged them, that they might drink the liquid impregnated with the virtues, strength, and courage of the defunct. Thus

[1] De Mofras, *Exploration de l'Orégon.*

[2] Venjaminof.

have the religion of relics and the multiple superstitions of necromancy originated.

It is not only the unconquerable valour of deceased heroes which is communicated to the living; the vulgar dead also transmit their noxious qualities. On that account in funeral processions, the corpse, carried in a cloth, is followed immediately by a dog as a prudential measure; it has been calculated that if the disease leaves the body of its victim, it will enter that of the animal.[1] By becoming visible, ghosts propagate the hunger disease, an appetite truly frightful, an unsatiable ravenousness. An Inoit[2] story tells of a rascal who violated a grave and took away from it some human fat with which he rubbed some tit-bits. These his host swallowed, and soon afterwards went mad; he rushed upon his wife, whom he devoured greedily, and then he ate up his children and dogs; he had to be killed himself, otherwise he would have devoured everybody.

In the time of Christian barbarism the churches stole from each other the treasures which they held up to the veneration of the faithful, pilfering a ringlet of the Virgin Mary, or borrowing, without intending to return it, a nail of Saint Peter. Similarly in Aleutia, amateurs ferret out sacred corpses of whalers, and steal them if they can; fraternity robs fraternity. A certain family possesses in its sanctum about a dozen gods, whose origin they dare not avow, the secret being transmitted from father to son. Out upon common morality! It would be shameful to steal a fur, execrable to carry off a piece of rope without permission, but it is a praiseworthy thing to procure patron saints and protecting genii by stratagem or violence.[3]

During his explorations in the Archipelago,[4] M. Pinard was lucky enough to come, in a remote spot, upon the cave of Aknâuh, wherein a lodge or fraternity had made its last

[1] *Journal des Missions évangéliques*, 1881.
[2] Rink, *Eskimo Tales*. [3] Cf. Judges xvii., xviii. [4] 1872-1873.

resting-place. These sepulchres, always constructed at a distance, were hidden in steep cliffs or on the summit of nearly inaccessible hills.

In a like manner, M. Wiener, when excavating the ancient ruins of Peru, discovered in a rocky cleft several mummies, which had been concealed there, either by letting them down with cords, or carrying them down by steps, which were afterwards destroyed. Analogous creeds create analogous practices. D'Orbigny and Dall believe that they have discovered among the Aleutians a repugnance to the placing of corpses in immediate contact with the soil; it would not therefore be correct to say that they inter the dead, since they wrap them round with dried mosses and sweet-smelling herbs. They are let down into a fissure in the rock, or hoisted like a boat slung on davits. Ordinary mortals are placed in a crouching position, arms round legs and knees against breast, but the valiant whalers are laid at full length, or set upright, clad in wooden armour, the head concealed by a mask, which protects the living from the fearful eyes of the dead: those eyes, those fatal eyes, —it does not suffice to close them, they must also be blindfolded. Was it from this motive that the Assyrians, various Egyptians,[1] and some of the Greeks—at least those of ancient Mycenæ—masked their dead? a custom which is also to be met with among the Dené Dindjié[2] and some Australian aborigines, between whom and the Aleutian there are so many marks of resemblance.

The mother who loses her nursling, places the poor "papoose" in a beautifully ornamented box, which she fastens on her back and carries about with her for a long while. Often she takes the miserable mummy in her arms and makes it a kind of toilette, disinfecting it, and removing the mouldiness. Primitive folk consider life as indestructible, and death but a change of condition. The

[1] Ebers, *Egypt.* [2] Petitot.

animals go to dwell in the other world, whilst awaiting their return to this. The mites are immortal, the mosquitoes eternal. The dead man takes all his fishing-tackle with him; he will make use of it. The tools and garments which he leaves behind, the objects of his personal use, remain in sympathy with him; hence their touch chills, and the sight of them inspires sadness.

Some of the Koloshes, more artless than their neighbours, believe in metempsychosis pure and simple. Death, they say, is but a momentary dissolution, and only lasts whilst the soul, driven from its dwelling-place, is seeking a new one in the body of a man, or a wolf, or a crow—it does not matter which. To be transmuted into a cetacean—what felicity! The sick and infirm often ask to be killed as quickly as possible, that they may be born again young and vigorous.

According to the belief generally adopted, the soul has choice of two abodes after death—that above, called *Coudli Parmian;* that below, *Adli Parmian,* which is at the bottom of the sea. The latter is much preferred in a zone where the sky is inclement and the earth inhospitable, and where nearly all nutriment comes from the ocean. The people of Guinea also believe that souls continue their existence in the depths of the sea. The Esquimaux thinks himself lost if he wanders but a little distance from the coast, his heart fails him if he does not feel himself to be in the immediate proximity of walruses and fish.[1] Some missionaries were describing the joys of the Christian paradise. They were interrupted by—

"And the seals? You say nothing about seals. Have you any seals in your heaven?" "Seals? Certainly not. What would seals do up there? But we have angels and archangels, we have cherubim and seraphim, Dominions and Powers, the twelve Apostles, the four-and-twenty elders." "That's all very well, but what animals have you?"

[1] Rink, Markham.

"Animals, none. . . . Yes, though, we have the Lamb, we have a lion, an eagle, a calf . . . but not your sea-calf; we have——" "That's enough; your heaven has no seals, and a heaven without seals cannot suit us!"

At the bottom of the Ocean dwell the blessed, the *arcissat*, recruited from among the heroic whalers, the good sailors drowned in tempests, men of courage who have committed suicide rather than live a burden on their families, and "the well-tattooed women," who have died in child-bed, having accomplished the great duty of maternity. Before these valiant men and women, the gates of the sub-marine Paradise open of themselves. But the generality of martyrs only get there by the "Dog's path," an obscure road, passing through fiords and clefts in the rocks; the descent takes five whole days; they arrive with bruised and bleeding limbs, if they arrive at all. A gust of wind blowing across them, an unlucky slip, and they fall down some precipice. At one time they must keep their balance upon a revolving wheel, smooth and polished, and then cross a bridge no broader than the blade of a knife. What dangers and fatigues must be undergone before arriving at the gate guarded by monstrous dogs! The souls are guided by the notes of a magic drum, which resounds in the distance; and woe to those who stray! They are devoured by strange animals, and are never seen again. However, the majority get into port, and take up their abode under the crust of land on which they have dwelt when in the body. Aleutians, Koloshes, Taïtanes, have each and all their subterranean district.

How much more easy to ascend to the sky, towards which the soul has but to let itself go, floating like a puff of smoke! But men of valour reprobate this self-indulgence, and prefer to face the terrors of the dismal road. For fear the dying man should shrink at the last moment, his friends tear him from his bed, lay him on the ground, and, still living, press his face against the soil, so as to

give him the first impetus towards the path below. Who would not take pains to gain those lower regions, where the eternal drums resound in the halls, ever bright and warm, of an immense *kajim!* Around the enormous pillars which support the earth, the souls leap and play at prisoner's base, or act splendid ballets. And then those feasts! those eating bouts! and the cetaceans—huge as the Leviathan at Abraham's banquet—that the Esquimaux souls will gobble up!

What a difference between the subterranean Hades, the abode of jollity, and the atmosphere, another ocean, whose depths are vast and barren deserts haunted by Famine! There the souls float in the clouds, dolorously wandering, stricken with hunger, chilled with terror, shaken and tossed by tempests, in danger of being swept away by whirlwinds into celestial space. However, some good luck comes to them, and sometimes these poor little things happen to get some amusement; amid the aurora borealis their innumerable hosts run and leap across the heaven, swift as lightning. Divided into two parties, they may be seen pushing hither and thither the head of a whale, which serves them for a ball. They even engage in terrible combats, and then their blood falls down in flakes of snow, for their arteries do not contain the beautiful rosy liquid of mortals, but a cold, white lymph. What an aerial battle goes on when the snow lies in heaps upon the ground!

"The Indians of the Pampas," physicists as able, have learned, on good authority, that in the celestial abode of Pillau their warriors enjoy a drunkenness that would be eternal, were it not broken by splendid hunts, in which they slay so very many ostriches, that the feathers, falling in a heap, form the clouds above our heads."[1]

Some high-flown shamans, Aleutian Platos and Thomas

[1] De Moussy, *Confédération Argentine.*

Aquinases; have embodied this rudimentary catechism, and developed it into a subtle and complicated system.

After the last breath, the organism resolves into its primary elements, but the corpse retains some sensibility as long as it preserves its form. The soul, attenuated and transparent as air, but somewhat greyish in appearance, divides into Shade and Spirit; the first departs into the subterraneous dwelling-place, the second goes to aerial space. If we interpret our text aright, the Shade of the Hyperboreans, a vapour from the blood, corresponds to the Greco-Roman *psyche*, representing the species in the individual. The Shades remain in *Coudli* for indefinite lengths of time—some more, others less—then re-enter the body of a woman, generally warned in a dream, and are born again upon earth. As to the Spirit, it is the cause of respiration, the irreducible element, the centre of personality. By means of the Shade, man becomes an integral part of humanity, by the Spirit he is distinguished from it. No doubt this vivifying breath of the shamans is the "fresh wind" of the Egyptians, the *rouach* of the Old Testament, the *pneuma* of the New, the *aura* of the Stoics. Drawn from the great atmospheric reservoir, it will return thither. Tornasouk, the Supreme Being, is called "Lord of the Breezes."[1] Those whose innate excellence has been proved by an extraordinary activity, go to associate with the other Spirits who dwell beyond the firmament, a solid sphere, as its name indicates, a circular canopy, which has the hardness and transparent colour of blue ice, and which turns round a prodigiously high mountain, a Merou situated in the remotest part of the Polar regions. The Spirits that have belonged to men who were specially fortunate and intelligent go to mingle with the stars, for all the stars have been Inoits. As for the "ego" of the dastards and that of the wicked sorcerers, the tempest sweeps them away and hunts them down; their lamentations

[1] *Sille minua, Sille nelegak.*

are carried on the wind. They may persist in their degeneration, and increase their own misery, but this is of no avail, for then they become stupid, lose all sensation, and finally existence itself, the air of which they are composed entering new substances.

But oh! most cunning doctor, how does it come that your Blessed walk among the stars and in the Elysium of marine abysses at one and the same time? How can the Shade and Spirit exist separately? The Hyperborean stammers out, "Thus have the fathers taught us." If he had studied in our colleges he might have asked: "Does not your mythology speak of Hercules as being in Hades and Olympus at the same time? Why impose upon our *angakout* a logic with which Homer and Virgil may dispense?"

Repose, the *dolce far niente*, is sweeter than anything else to the Aleutians. From the top of rocks or from their turfy roofs they love to gaze upon the sea. It is said that they wait for the rise of dawn, to bathe themselves in light. Anyhow, when morning breaks, both men and women ascend to their posts of observation. Nor clouds, nor vapours, nor fogs escape them; from their direction, their forms, their colours, they infer what kind of weather it will be, and what the motion of the sea, the strength and nature of the waves. If they have leisure, they stay motionless for hours, without making a sign or breathing a word. In spite of mists and icy winds, these indolent and melancholy dreamers do the "kief" like the Orientals. Yet idleness is not one of their vices, for they contribute with patience and conscientiousness an immense amount of labour, if they comprehend the necessity for it; but they will take care to expend trouble and effort only when it is indispensable, preferring, like the wise Solomon, "a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of good cheer with strife."

They are endowed with an endurance proof against everything, and withstand cold, hunger, and fatigue with a calmness and equanimity deserving of admiration, but which has brought them into contempt. So long as they are not driven to extremities—then their rage knows no bounds, and if they cannot revenge themselves they will unhesitatingly commit suicide—the Aleutians have the strong patience of the ox and the affectionate mildness of the cow; indeed it has not been left unsaid that their patience, an attribute of the lower animals, comes from insensibility. Sorrow must be very keen and oppression very hard to provoke a complaint; neither sigh nor groan is uttered by a sick man.

Without anything having passed his lips for three or four days a man will toil and moil without apparent discomfort. He is asked, "Are you in pain?" He does not answer, but if he is pressed he smiles sadly. It sometimes happens that the hunters catch their leg in a wolf or fox trap. The barbed iron cannot be drawn out without being pulled quite through the limb; to this operation they submit without a sign of impatience, at need performing it for themselves. However, these wounds are not long in healing when treated by diet and rest. Differing from our urchins, the children neither slap nor thump; their vexation is only manifested by disagreeable observations. And they must find it difficult to wrangle, as their language is deficient in terms of abuse and insult. But civilisation has provided for this, and nowadays the drunkards who apostrophise one another make use of a little stock of opprobrious epithets drawn from the Russian vocabulary. Formerly, when there were hostilities between two tribes, the more furious lay in ambush and attempted to deal a hurtful blow, after which, whether it succeeded or not, they beat a retreat. But such ambuscades are rare, as Father Veniani did not witness a single lively quarrel at Ounalaska during the ten years of his stay there, and as Ross could not make the people of

Baffin's Land, who have no weapons of warfare, understand what we mean by battles and combats. In the whole of Boothia Felix only one case of murder has been known; no one associated with the perpetrator, every one avoided him. Peaceful in the extreme, they will submit themselves to whoso wishes to command them; they much dislike to obey—but still more to fight and quarrel. If some youth put forward his opinion in a manner more decided than seems fitting, his elders, even though they are of a contrary mind, treat the thing as a joke, or say to him, "Explain thy reasons; perhaps thou knowest of something new!" These artless folk do not dare to buy or sell on their own account; excessively modest, they cannot hear themselves praised without uneasiness, and redden to the ears if they are complimented before a friend; on the other hand, any reproaches before a stranger will put them in a fury. With all their patience, they have sudden reactions and frightful fits of anger.

"Charley returned empty-handed. His wife came to help unload the boat; she was pattering through the mud, her burden on her shoulders, when Charley, without apparent motive, vigorously discharged a harpoon into her back; luckily the point did not penetrate the thickness of her clothing. She, turning round without a word, took out the harpoon, and went on her way. When they quarrel with their wives, they seize the first object that comes to hand—knife, stone, or axe—and throw it at their better halves; they do the same to their dogs. But though often ill treated, the wife is the object of a true and constant affection."[1]

Let those who can, explain these contradictions and inequalities of character. Cook was one of the first to praise their kindness of heart. Cartwright, who lived among the Labradorians for many long years, could not say too much

[1] Hall.

about their courage and endurance, their tenderness and goodwill.

"Judge of their honesty. We had unladen all our cargo —wood, coal, tar, oils, pots, ropes, cordage, lances, harpoons, all objects which to the Esquimaux are equivalent to treasures. They touched none of them, although these goods were left unreservedly without watch or ward."[1]

The captain of a boat, who had goods to transport across Behring's Straits, being overtaken by a tempest, threw his sailors overboard, one after the other, without their making the slightest objection. Were they not in honour bound to bring the cargo safe into port![2]

Any one who picks up floating wood or wreckage, has only to put his windfall above high-water mark, and place a stone on it; he can then leave it out there as long as he likes. If a hidden store of goods be discovered, it is never touched, no matter what scarcity there may be at home. The Weddas of Ceylon, uncivilised among the uncivilised, have a similar respect for provisions which they find hung up to a tree.

Honesty and Veracity are sisters. The Aleutian, incapable of falsehood, would overwhelm with contempt the man whom he found out in a lie, and would never speak to him again. In his exquisite sincerity, he regards the object that he has promised to any one as no longer belonging to himself; he puts it aside, and no matter what need he may have of it, he will not even borrow it. To refuse one of his gifts, especially if it is of little value, is to show him that he is not liked.

Sales are effected by a middle-man. Whilst negotiation is proceeding, the seller should be ignorant of the purchaser's name, and *vice versâ*. "Out of shyness," we are told. But what if it were for the sake of gentility, and the better to ensure equity in the transaction? They abstain from transacting any business when a member of the community

[1] Hall. [2] Hellwald, *Naturgeschichte des Menschen.*

is ill.[1] Can this superfine sentiment of politeness be out of regard for him who is in pain? Woman is excluded from all commercial affairs; it is desired that she should be above suspicion of lucre, and so she engages in no kind of traffic either with men or even with other women.

The theory of rent which dominates our western civilisation; capital reproducing itself in perpetuity and multiplying by the work of others—what monstrous ideas would they be to these good-natured people, who gladly lend every tool and instrument of which they have no immediate need, and to whom the idea of indemnity has never occurred in the case of the borrower's having lost or damaged the object lent him. Furthermore, a hunter may not take away the snares which he has once spread, and whoever goes to visit them shall have the game. In the taking of fish, even strangers may profit by the dam which they have neither constructed nor fitted up. What would Newfoundland, Saint Pierre, and Miquelon say of these customs? All exceptional game, large, like the whale, or of a rare species, belongs to the community; matters are so arranged that all can have a share of it. It is seldom that the head of a family possesses anything beside a boat and a sledge, his clothing, his weapons, and a few tools. Communists without knowing it, the Inoits have only the rudiments of that private property which they, however, know well how to respect. Living amid these snow-plains, associating together for the greater part of their occupations at sea—the great, vast, changeful sea, which cannot be cut up into lots and small holdings, nor parcelled out into domains—the equal division which is made of all they produce constitutes a mutual assurance without which they would perish one after the other. Every seal that is captured is divided, at least in times of scarcity, between all the heads of families. If they do not divide the portions with exact equality, it is because

[1] Rink.

the largest are devoted to the children; the adults go without anything for a long while, that the youngsters may receive something.

So deeply communistic is the character of the Esquimaux, that when he happens to become possessed of anything, he takes a pride in giving or sharing it all, for he too says that it is more blessed to give than to receive. The following scene took place on the banks of the Yukon:—

"All the neighbours had been invited. Games, songs, dances, and banquets lasted several days. On the last evening, all the provisions being exhausted, the host and hostess, clad in new raiment, began to make presents, giving each friend what they thought would be acceptable to him. In this manner they distributed 10 guns, 10 complete suits of clothes, 200 armfuls of strung beads, and a quantity of skins; 10 of the wolf, 50 of the doe, 100 of the seal, 200 of the beaver, 500 sables, and a number of blankets. After which the host and hostess took off their garments, which they also gave away, and having reclothed themselves in rags, wound up by making a little speech: 'We have testified to you our affection. Now we are poorer than any of you, and we do not regret it. We have nothing left. Your friendship suffices us!'"

Each one made a sign of thanks, and retired in silence. The festivity had cost fifteen years of toil, economy, and privation.[1] The family had not lost everything, since they had gained the esteem and gratitude of their fellow-citizens; what they had expended in material wealth was given back to them in honour and consideration. Whoever has displayed so much munificence and generosity becomes a kind of consular personage, is consulted in all cases of difficulty, and when he speaks no one thinks of contradicting him.[2]

As to hospitality! Those who come in from out-of-doors take their places in the warm, under the same blanket as

[1] Dall. [2] Wrangell, *Observations.*

those already within. Hall tells, with much feeling, how one day he returned quite benumbed; an old mother took his frozen feet, and after having well rubbed them, she put them in her bosom to warm them the better.

Setting aside their sexual vices and irregularities, these worthy people have realised the Ebionite ideal. They are verily the "poor," the "pure in heart," who are given to us as an example in the *Imitation of Christ.*

He who has, shares with him who has not. The hungry, without a word of excuse or entreaty, sits himself down beside him who eats and puts his hand in the dish. Europeans, ever mistrustful and ready to pass harsh judgments, could not fail to take these communistic habits for theft and pillage. In fact, these innocents, on their first visit to the ships, behaved as they did at home, seized what pleased them and carried it off, thinking that it was theirs for the trouble of taking. On perceiving that the foreigners considered this very bad behaviour, they restored what they had unduly appropriated, and strove in every way to regain favour.

"These Esquimaux," remarks Lubbock, "have less religion and more morality than any other race."

The missionaries of the Greek Church—we honour their sincerity—declare that the Aleutians could only lose by the change proposed to them, and that their conversion to Christianity was little to be desired.[1] This is not an isolated example; some honest Danish evangelists said as much of the Nicobarians, and so left them.

Strangely enough, the Greeks and Romans broke forth into eulogiums upon the men from beyond the North winds, "the blameless Hyperboreans," who lived in perfect happiness and purest innocence. By their gentleness and peaceful habits, the Esquimaux might have inspired the legend; except that the *hyperborei campi* and the *hyperboreæ oræ* of Horace and Virgil were supposed to be met with

[1] Bastian, *Rechts Verhaeltnisse*, lxxix.

under "a sky where the sun never sets." This might, on a pinch, be explained by the midnight sun, but we do not imagine that the legend is in any way founded on fact. It is a declaration of faith, a confident affirmation that justice, the secret desire of all hearts, is no pitiful mockery, that fraternity among men is no chimera. Convinced that it is possible to realise their ideal, some enthusiasts have told, have even believed, that their dream was already fulfilled, and that it had been seen. Where? Very, very far away, at the limits of the worlds—amongst the Hyperboreans—amongst the gymnosophists of India —amongst the Ethiopians—in the kingdom of Prester John—in that of Eldorado—and also in the Abbey of Thelema.

And nothing about Government?

In fact, I had forgotten it. My excuse is that the Aleutians had practically none before the Russians came and forced themselves upon them. Nobody commanded and nobody obeyed. The whalers and the *angakout* exercised a predominant influence, in virtue of an intelligence and bravery recognised as superior, but any one might gainsay them if he liked. The old men also acted in the capacity of public counsellors; they were deferred to, because it was the general wish. The islands of importance, and the larger groups, had arrived at a kind of representation. A *Tajoun*,[1] a president by election, centralised inquiries, and governed paternally. He was exempt from compulsory labour, and rowers were attached to his boat of office, to the Bucentaur of Ounimak or Ounalaska. Often he possessed some slaves, who were immolated at his death, so that they might keep him company; this custom has not yet been abandoned by the Koloshes. The prerogatives of the Tajoun were scarcely more than honorary. If he was chosen to manage a fishing expedition, when the

[1] Or *Taljoun*, *Toion*, *Toyoun*.

enterprise ended, farewell to command, for "our enemy is our master." The legends hold up to execration some tyrants of former times who wanted to usurp the power; their murderers are commemorated as public benefactors.[1]

In short, the Esquimaux is not deficient in ambition, but he seeks less for domination than for superiority; he prefers direction to command. He has no need, as we have, of an authority before which he must tremble; he does not arm justice with a sword, nor authority with a club. Without prisons or policemen, without sheriffs or bailiffs, poor savage, is he not indeed to be pitied?

Two years after the expedition of Behring and Tchirikoff, in 1741, Sergeant Bassof, stationed at Kamtschatka, constructed a boat of bone, and, as luck would have it, made for the Aleutian Isles. In 1745 another Russian, Michel Nevodsikof, visited the Archipelago, and, on his return, told how the most precious furs of arctic foxes, bears, and sea-otters abounded on those distant shores. His marvellous tales excited the ardour of adventurous men, determined to succeed at all costs. Setting out singly or in bands, the adventurers, in ever-increasing numbers, put themselves at the head of the inoffensive natives, and soon treated them as slaves.

In 1764 the Russian Government conceded the working of the Archipelago to a company called "The Sibero-American," of which the headquarters, administrative and political, were to be at Petersburg, and the chief branch at Irkoutsk. Modelled upon the plan of the East India Company, it proposed to conquer the Kouriles and Aleutian Archipelago, to gain a footing on the American continent from the fifty-fourth degree north to the Arctic Ocean, reckoning on being able to get into Japan, and to work wonders there. It was allowed the rights of enlisting soldiers, constructing forts, and hoisting colours; but

[1] Rink.

was subject to a tax for the benefit of the Crown of ten per cent. on the net profits, without prejudice to the tribute in furs to be paid by the natives. "It is easy to be generous at other folks' expense!"

The agents of civilisation arrived with cannon, grape-shot, and magnificent proclamations. They brought with them, they said, abundance; they brought the arts and industries of the West; they brought the eternal felicities dispensed by orthodox religion; they brought axes, knives, iron, steel, wood, blankets, several useful things, and others to which novelty lent a charm; they brought, above all, tobacco, and the wonderful, terrible brandy, for which every savage gives his soul. They passed for divine beings, and their emperor for the God of the world.[1] Considering the benefits conferred by their presence alone, they could not do less than award to themselves the territory, and impose some dues; and so the Aleutians yielded up their furs, and admired the generosity of the strangers. One day, the red-tape gentry gave notice of an order to the effect that half, neither more nor less, of the products of the chase and fisheries was to be handed over "for better division, according to needs." The simpletons obeyed, hoping that their guests would carry out the distribution with greater intelligence and equity than themselves. It can be guessed how the division was managed; it can be guessed also how that terrible logician, the musket, did justice to complaints. No doubt such confiding surrender was an inexcusable folly. But please to admire the difference between man and man, savage and civilised. What if the "Assistance Publique" just asked the Parisians for the half of their revenues, profits, and salaries, for the benefit of the poor and indigent, and the doing away of misery—what reply would be given?

Their power consolidated, the Russians raised the mask of philanthropy, cutting down from season to season the

[1] *Tanakh Magugu.*

share of the famished and needy. To pile up skins and to fill the casks with oil, they became as cruel as the *Conquistadores* had been in amassing gold. The tax-gatherer soon turned assassin. Some of them have been seen amusing themselves by ranging these miserable heathens in a close line, and betting on how many heads in a row would be penetrated by a musket ball. They took daughters and wives and kept them as hostages for fathers and husbands.[1] In high places, however, shame was felt for what was going on. The Empress Catherine, extremely pious as we all know, wishing to do something, decided, in 1793, that missionaries should be sent out to these poor Aleutians, to instruct them in Christianity, and galley-slaves to initiate them in agriculture. She sent out by the ship *The Three Holy Men* a cargo of convicts; the illustrious friend of philosophers and economists could think of no greater kindness towards the unfortunate natives. But who would have thought it! Things went from bad to worse. In 1799 the enterprise was reorganised; for the accomplishment of a task of civilisation, if the official document is to be credited—for the promotion of commerce and agriculture—for the furtherance of scientific discoveries—for the propagation of the orthodox faith. For which objects, the Company, confirmed in its rights and privileges, was transformed into a representative and delegate of the Crown, from whom it received soldiers. Resistance to its enactments became a crime. The Aleutians, who had yielded themselves up as subjects, were treated as slaves; without either pay or food, they were overwhelmed with compulsory labour. When they brought in the furs exacted from them, they had but done their duty, and woe to those who failed to do so![2] In spite of the efforts of the missionaries, amongst whom was the worthy

[1] Sauer, Billing's *Expedition*, append. 56; Sabalischin, *Sibirische Briefe*, *Moskauer Zeitung*.

[2] Von Kittlitz, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, etc.

Father Innocent Veniani, the gospel did not spread. But when they thought of exempting the neophytes from all taxation for a space of three consecutive years, a miracle was performed! It was a new Pentecost, grace was poured forth in floods, the truth brought light into their hearts, and multitudes hastened to the baptismal font. But eternal felicity was disdained, so long as a blanket and a knife were not given as pledges of it; Paradise, a bundle of cord, and six fishing-hooks were expected to go together.[1]

The directors of the company styled themselves officially "Right Honourable;" their head clerks they dignified "Honourable," and they condescended to style their copyists and accountants "Semi-Honest," an appellation still more flattering. Krusenstern, a guileless seaman, declares that to get into the service it was necessary to be a bad character, an adventurer of the worst sort. According to Langsdorf:—

"The Aleutians are ruled by some *promyschlenik*,[2] rascally ignoramuses and evil-doers, whose manifold crimes have caused them to be expatriated. They do as they please, and render an account to no one. A terrible pestilence would commit fewer ravages than this administration."

The naturalist Kittlitz, who accompanied Admiral Lutke into these parts, and was admitted into every office, dared not tell the truth, but left it to be guessed.

"The Russo-American Company exacts the service of one-half the entire male population, aged from eighteen to fifty years. This labour is entirely gratuitous. Some paid labourers are also employed. Six months the men spend in capturing marine animals, and six others in pursuing the fox. Under these conditions it is difficult to understand how a sufficient number of hands remain to supply the most indispensable needs of the family."

Three generations of Christians and civilisers sufficed to exhaust the country, and to bleed it to death. The islands were rich in fur-yielding animals, and for that reason all

[1] Golovnine. [2] Adventurers.

furry animals were to be exterminated. From the islands of Pribylon 2,500,000 seal-skins were taken away in the thirty years following their discovery.[1] So many beasts were slain, that in one year[2] about 800,000 skins were piled in the storehouses, and as they had not a ready sale, the greater part were burnt. This method of working attained its logical conclusion—ruin. In the end, this plundering cost more than it brought in. "The affair no longer paid," and in 1867, Aleutia was sold to the United States, with what remained of the Aleutians.

What will the Americans do with this new territory, for which they are now responsible? How will they treat the natives? As they did the Red-skins, probably. If they should wish to resuscitate the unfortunate race, they would not be able; it is at its last gasp. But if they wish to soothe its end, let them make haste. Famished, worn-out, over-worked, the population are disgusted with existence. Why should they give birth to children whom it would be impossible to feed? Why augment the number of the unfortunate? When the agents of civilisation, with benefits in their hands, landed there, the Aleutians numbered a hundred thousand, if we are to believe the first traders, but the figures appear to be very much exaggerated. The estimate, perhaps also much too high, given by Chelikof in 1791, was fifty thousand souls, of whom Father Joasaph boasted of having converted more than a fourth. In 1860, the parochial registers showed not more than ten thousand individuals, and in this total were comprised the Russians and the half-breeds. The Aleutians, properly speaking, were put down only at about two thousand.[3] The change in suzerainty has not brought, and could not bring, immediate

[1] 1787-1817. [2] 1803.

[3] The American census, taken in 1880 in the territory of Alaska by M. Petrof, showed 2214 Aleutians and 16,303 Inoits scattered in the districts of Kadiak, Bristol Bay, Kouskokoïm, Youkon, Northern Behring, and the Arctic Coast.

amelioration. Thus among the Oulongues, visited by Dall, in a mixed population of 2450 individuals, the mortality is 130 to a birth-rate of 100. The Aleutians are not very prolific. It is generally agreed that the entire Esquimaux race is rapidly decaying, save perhaps in the Greenland districts, over which Denmark watches with paternal solicitude.

Consumption has made sad havoc among the Inoits. It alone has killed more individuals than all other diseases; and this terrible scourge,[1] hitherto unknown, was brought by civilisation. Close by, the Red-skins are being decimated by small-pox—the sad gift of the Pale Faces.

Why has the civilised man so fatal an effect upon the savage? There are those who can determine the physiological causes; let us inquire into some of the moral causes which lead to this result.

Regarded as gods, and strong in the reputation which belongs to civilised man, however gross and ignorant he may be, the Russians had only to show themselves to gain possession of the entire Archipelago, and to reduce its population to servitude. Were the Aleutians therefore cowards and unworthy of liberty? Not so. Hearken to the testimony borne in favour of the race by one of the men who knew it best:—

"Inoits are Inoits, and will remain Inoits. Independence is the essential feature of their character; they never stand coercion no matter what pledges they have taken or been forced to take. Born free and in a wild land, they like to come and go as they list, never allowing themselves to be ruled by the rod."[2]

Nevertheless the Aleutians have allowed themselves to be ruled by the rod!

By the rod?—that needs explanation. The Russians had made free use of the knout and national cat upon these fanciful islanders, who let themselves be almost killed with

[1] Hall. [2] *Ibid.*

indifference, and committed suicide if struck with a stick. It is just because the Russians tried to rule them with the rod that the Aleutians are dying or are dead. Life without liberty possessing no charm for them, they thought of fleeing to another world to escape the taskmasters and tyrants. They began by giving themselves up unreservedly, but never dreamt that surrender meant being whipped. Docile and amenable to a high degree, they accepted the guidance of men whose superiority they exaggerated, and whom they looked upon as elder brothers. What might not have been done by wise and benevolent men with these creatures, who offered themselves up so readily! But what signified their souls and hearts? The freebooters asked only for oil and lard, and skins of the sable and fox.[1]

Let us take a general view of the question. In the struggles for existence, through which humanity has forced a bloody path, passive virtues are strangled by aggressive vices. But without calling vice and virtue into the question, it has been everywhere seen that, on coming in contact with white men, political and social systems become disordered, ancient customs fall into disuse, former distinctions cease to have any meaning. Those whom the natives took almost for gods, good spirits, patrons, and protectors, were transformed into devils from hell. Their troubled conscience was bewildered by questions of good and evil. Muskets and brandy—there was nothing else left. The chiefs, derided by a lout from over the sea, felt themselves degraded, having lost all strength of will, all dignity before the pistol, the pocket-thunder; the sorcerers themselves lost their wits when they became aware of their absurd impotence before the great magic of the white men. The arm of the warrior fell paralysed before the weapons that blasted; with his bow and arrows, a hero was but a fool in front of a rifle. By losing all confidence in themselves, they lost all pleasure in living, and even their natural

[1] *Vide* Sproat, Rink, and Bastian, who develop the same idea.

disposition. There were no more joy and gaiety, no more songs and dances, no more grotesque and comic fancies. Let us shroud ourselves in a dark and doleful day, in a thick and heavy atmosphere; let us go down alive into the funereal cavern—that of our nation; let us die with what was once our country.[1]

Modern civilisation, irresistible when it spoils and disorganises barbaric societies, displays a strange incompetence in bettering their condition. It is for want of kindness, for want of humanity. Our genius is neither amiable nor sympathetic. What! to encounter a people so mild and patient, so well inclined to justice and equity, and to know only how to subjugate and flog, to decimate and to destroy! This little world possessed gaiety, playfulness, and courage; it asked nothing better than to live by working, but it also wished to sing, dance, and feast. And as soon as it encountered our progress, it became sad and morose. These people are still children, but children disillusioned. We have discouraged them by so many injustices, so harassed and maddened them, that we have broken the mainspring, have sullied life at its source. Thus it happened to the Guanches, formerly one of the best developed specimens of the species. Simple, happy, innocent, their islands well deserved the name of "Fortunate." We crushed them. Why and how? And so, when the last of these poor Aleutians has disappeared, it will be said—"The pity of it!"

[1] Dall.

CHAPTER III.

THE APACHES.—NOMAD HUNTERS AND BRIGANDS.

THE name Apaches is the generic term applied to several Indian tribes of North America, amongst whom various authors include the Comanches, Navajos, Mohaves, Hualapais, Yumas, Yampas, and Southern Athapaskas, who subdivide themselves into numerous hordes, amongst which are the Mescaleros, Llaneros, Zicarillas, Chiriguais, Kotchis, Piñaleños, Coyoteros, Gileños, Mimbreños. The Apaches, properly so called, have given themselves the name of *Shis Inday*, or men of the woods. They wander, rather than dwell, in the vast and ill-defined territory, which descends from the banks of the great Salt Lake in the north towards Chihuhua in the south, and stretches from California and Soñora in the west to Texas and New Mexico in the east. It is furrowed by the Rio Grande, which flows into the Atlantic; by another Rio Grande; and by the Rio Gila, which empties itself into the Pacific. It is a stony region, at an elevation of from 2300 to 6500 feet above the sea. Its lava beds are intersected by cañons or rigolas a thousand feet deep, and as many wide, eaten out by the streams. Numerous isolated peaks, which are extremely steep, and excessively cold in winter, tower above the plateaux, emerging for the most part from the forest, shelter of man and beast. During ten months in the year, the sun pours down scorching rays from a cloudless sky upon sandy plain and mountain rock, but with the coming of night a sudden chill seems to fall from the stars.

These violent alternations of temperature provoke gusts of wind, which raise eddies of alkaline dust, irritating to eyes and lungs. For a fortnight in April, and six weeks in October and November, the rain falls in torrents, and shortly afterwards the fissures in the rocks and hollows in the soil blossom and grow green. Wild sheep, antelopes,[1] and deer come out of their lurking-places, and behind them creep the coyote, the bear, the hyena-wolf, and the Apache, terrible to man and to every other animal.

He is a magnificent wild beast, this Apache; at least such of the Apaches as are granivorous, or rather omnivorous. The Navajos, Mohaves, and Comanches, who, thanks to their nascent agriculture, are able to indulge in a varied diet, are almost all six feet in height, and the women are as well grown as the men. The vigorous muscles of the chest and arms, the dainty extremities, the often agreeable features, the rather wide face, the large, brilliant black eyes, with their strange light and really extraordinary power of vision, go to make up a splendid whole. The complexion may be of any shade of brown, from light to dark, not excluding brick red. The hair is black, and—a detail worthy of remark—the beard is by no means scanty. They have often been cited as the finest specimens of the human race.

As much cannot be said for the Apaches properly, who are almost exclusively carnivorous, and described as ugly and unpleasing, with an impassive physiognomy, wrinkled and withered features, a broad face, flat nose, prominent cheek-bones, too wide a mouth, thin lips, and a sinister expression. Their eyes are slightly oblique, and more brilliant than those of most Northern Indians, but the glassy glare in them suggests the eyes of the coyote. Their dull black hair is never combed, and hangs in thick elf-locks upon their shoulders; except for these they are

[1] *Antilocapra Americana*, Beard.

entirely hairless. They seem stunted beside their tall neighbours, for their average height is only five feet five inches.[1]

A horse or mule would be covered with blood by cacti that would not scratch an Apache. His thick integument makes him almost insensible to the inclemency of the weather. These Indians go about under the most scorching sun with no protection; but when they have leisure to attend to their comfort, they cover their heads, like the Australians and Andamanese, with a mud cap. This is agreeably cool, and rids them of vermin. For like reasons, they coat their bodies with a layer of mud. They generally indulge in the modest luxury of mocassins to protect their feet against thorns; for this purpose the stout sole is turned up at the toe in a wide peak. As for clothing, properly so called, they dress themselves up to a ridiculous extent, not for the sake of hygiene, still less for that of modesty, but out of vanity and coquetry, to attract attention—the men by some trophy of murder and rapine, the young women by some coloured rag, by a bark petticoat or by a sheep-skin, which they have adorned with lines and stripes, and made flexible by industriously rubbing it with brains. Some tattoo their chin; but the pink of fashion is to be smeared with gaudy colours. This painting runs no danger from their ablutions, for they only bathe for pleasure, and there is very little water. Either on account of their want of cleanliness, or because they feed only on flesh, and principally upon that of the horse, ass, and mule, these Apaches (they remind us of the hippophagi of Solutré, whose bones were found mingled with those of from fifty to a hundred thousand horses[2])—these Apaches give out a penetrating equine odour, especially when they are heated. When

[1] The stature of eighteen Apaches and Tontos measured by Ten Kate, varied from 5 feet 5 inches to 6 feet.—*Société Anthropologique, Bulletin*, 1873.

[2] *Bulletin de la Société d'Anthropologie*, 1874.

riding-horses perceive it, they turn back.[1] Once more we find occasion to notice that bodily cleanliness is generally a sign of a somewhat advanced civilisation. When girls reach the age of puberty, their eyebrows are picked out, hair by hair, and soon afterwards they are also relieved of their eyelashes. Is this to enhance their beauty?[2]

Their wigwams are constructed of poles or branches, wattled with brushwood or leafy twigs, and covered with skins, turf, and flat stones. The approach to these sugar-loaf huts is choked with fæcal matter and offensive carrion. During the inclement season our savages are fond of seeking shelter in caves, where they make huge fires, and lie bathed in perspiration, upon the bare rock; the result of which is that they are decimated by rheumatism and pneumonia;[3] a severe wound would be less dangerous to them. They are not comfortable except in the open air; they feel oppressed under a roof, mewed up when they are between walls; they do not really enjoy life except during their expeditions. When the nights are too cold and the wind too icy, they shrink into some crevice, or dig a hole where they can sleep for a few hours.

In former times bisons abounded over the whole of North America; in numberless herds they wandered through the continent from Great Slave Lake to the Gulf of Florida. But at the present day they have been exterminated throughout the south, and their numbers much diminished in the northerly region by the white man's rifle, which has thereby starved the people who fed upon them. "Kill the bisons," said a governor of the Pale Faces, "your bullets will deflect upon the Indian." Thus it happens that the Apache is generally reduced to the pursuit of small game. His most dangerous weapon is the indomitable patience

[1] Bancroft. The wild-beast odour of the New Caledonians seems to be persistent in spite of all the appliances of cleanliness. V. Patouillet, *Trois ans en Nouvelle-Calédonie.*

[2] Crémony.

[3] Helfft, *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, 1858.

which keeps his dusky body absolutely motionless behind rocks and greyish brushwood. Indians have been seen to cover themselves with grassy pieces of turf, which transformed them into a bit of the prairie; amongst yuccas to disguise themselves with yuccas; in the open country to stretch themselves under a grey woollen blanket, so cleverly besprinkled with earth that soldiers sent in pursuit took them for blocks of granite. They are as crafty in these mystifications as the Bhils of India[1] or the savages of Australia.

As they have no agriculture worthy the name, and no domestic animals, the larder of these unfortunate folk is often empty, despite all their cunning; and they disdain nothing that is eatable. They make the best of touna figs, acorns, fruits, bulbs, berries, and roots, and gather pumpkins and certain beans which grow wild. They sow a little maize, but their nutriment is almost entirely animal—fallow deer, red deer, wild sheep, quails, squirrels, rats, mice, worms, and snakes. They have no false delicacy. People become fastidious about quality when the quantity is abundant; there is no choice but in what is superfluous. When by any chance the supply of food enables them to take their fill, our savages gorge to repletion, and swallow enormous pieces. But dearth is the normal condition in Apache Land. The too short spring is followed by a long and scorching summer; soon the grass is withered, the herbivorous animals die or disappear, and those which are carnivorous begin to suffer. Famine is stoically borne, but after prolonged famine comes death.

When a country cannot feed its inhabitants, the inhabitants must provide for themselves elsewhere. Climate and soil transform the Apaches of the American continent, like the Bedouins and Kurds under almost the same latitudes on the continent of Asia, into nomads, hunters, brigands, and thieves. Mounted on fleet horses (they are born

[1] Bastian, *Culturvœlker Amerika's.*

horsemen), our hungry Indians go forth to plunder, in bands of from three or four to a dozen, scarcely ever more, for they must live on the road. They go enormous distances in quest of prey, happy when they light upon some scanty herbage where they may find grasshoppers, a lizard, or a chance bird; meanwhile they nibble at their *tasajo*—strips of meat dried in the sun—and fast until a kind Providence directs them to a lonely ranche or a party of travellers. They only attack openly if they cannot do otherwise, or if their superiority is evident. They lie in ambush like a wolf; they cower down and hide for days, disguised as bushes, rocks, and logs of wood; then, when the fitting moment arrives, they rush upon their victims, killing the men, sometimes carrying off the women as slaves, and the children for the sake of ransom, or to make brigands of them; but first and foremost seizing upon the horses and mules, which they drive before them. Before any one can set out in pursuit, they have fled like the wind into the labyrinth of gorges and cañons, into those deserts of burning sand, which are real lakes of fire, "crossings of death," *jornadas de muerte*, as the Mexicans say. Pumpelly relates that when he crossed these terrible regions the fatigue affected his brain, and for several days he was in a state of delirium. The ravishers are at home on desert and mountain; they double and triple the stages, until covered with bruises and wounds, exhausted and footsore, the captured beasts fall dying before the den of the human-visaged wolves, male and female, who greet them with yells of joy.

Greed and anguish so whet their teeth that they do not always wait until the prey is dead. Flinging themselves upon it, they devour it still alive, some cutting and carving, others tearing off the limbs and mangling them by main force, without more care for the suffering of their victim than the civilised man who gulps down an oyster seasoned with a strip of lemon, and without considering themselves more cruel than the cook who skins an eel whilst it writhes

under his nails. When the first fury of hunger is appeased they spit some pieces over a fire, but it is a very little while before these too are swallowed, still smoking and burning, partly raw, partly charred. The entrails are looked upon as tit-bits, and bestowed as a special honour. All have an equal right to the flesh of the beast, but the hunter who has slaughtered it claims the hide or fleece.

These orgies to appease hunger, these crowning festivities of wretches who continually run the risk of perishing of inanition, recall the grand act of the Dionysian mysteries, in which the initiated, male and female, threw themselves upon the goat, symbol of Bacchus Zagreus, bit into the bare skin of the trembling limbs, plunged bloody hands into the torn vitals, and contended for the heart that they might devour it still beating.

The distance seems trifling between raw-meat eaters and cannibals, and the Apaches are accused of anthropophagy also. The fact is not proved; but they are reported to have once answered that the Puntalis, a more northerly tribe, are not good to eat, as their flesh tastes too salt.

As for weapons, guns are still rare, and have not altogether supplanted spears and arrows tipped with pieces of hard wood, obsidian, native copper, and sometimes with iron, or a sort of bronze, which must be as hard and as elastic as steel, and be obtained by smelting copper on green leaves. I am sorry to know no more about this.

Our authors are not in agreement on the head of sexual relations. Amongst human animals, as amongst wild beasts, there must be a season consecrated to love. According to Bancroft, the Apaches are distinguished from their more civilised neighbours by the chastity imposed upon their women before and after marriage. Not that a husband cannot repudiate his wife on the faintest caprice, and even obtain repayment of the price he gave for her; not that a wife cannot also leave her husband; but in such a case the

man who has been cast off will consider that he has received an affront which must immediately be wiped out with blood. Without delay he rushes off right or left, and slays some by-stander. Some one must die for the injury sustained by his pride; the offence was personal, but his vengeance will be impersonal; the big child sees nothing in this but what is obvious and legitimate.

In other quarters we are told that marriage is unknown, that they pair at pleasure, and even on certain occasions indulge in general promiscuity. This is clear and precise, and our authority, Schmitz, speaks as an eye-witness. The two opinions may not be irreconcilable. Besides, it is beyond question that community of wives has its limitations. The chief of a band, on his return from a pillaging expedition, has a right to assign one of the captives to himself, as *spolia opima*. If he twines a rag in her tresses, she becomes "the captain's share;" no one will touch her without his permission. If he wish to take her for wife on a long lease, he will break an arrow over her head; by this act she ceases to be a person, and becomes the chattel of the conqueror.

The same symbolism exists amongst the nomad Tartars:—

"Kasmak seized the young Kalmuck, drew forth a kerchief, put it round her neck, let fly an arrow over her head. . . ."[1]

The ancient Greeks also thrust a javelin amid the locks of their female prisoners, whom they spoke of gaining "at the spear's point." We come upon the institution of marriage in the making, so far as capture and taking possession go. This earliest appropriation is followed by others. For property does not proceed from the family, as theorists used to assert on *a priori* grounds; but the family derives its origin from property; as its name indicates, the family began as merely a drove of slaves.

[1] Radloff, *Türkischen Stämme Süd Siberiens*, iv.

Though marriage amongst the Apaches is only rudimentary, it is already complicated by certain insanities. The young couple avoid meeting their fathers and mothers-in-law; during hunting, that game may not fail them;[1] at ordinary times, that their union may not be barren. Despite these precautions, the women early lose the faculty of having children.[2] At what age? It would be difficult to tell exactly; they scarcely know what years are, and care little to reckon them up.

The ordinary time allowed between one pregnancy and another is three years, devoted to suckling the baby. The child remains with its mother until it can pluck certain fruits for itself, and has caught a rat by its own unaided efforts. After this exploit it goes and comes as it lists; is free and independent, master of its civil and political rights, and soon lost in the main body of the horde. The parents would be ill-advised to punish their boys or reprimand them severely. Nothing serious takes place without the consent of the entire tribe, which has by no means abdicated its collective paternal rights, or delegated them to the heads of families in their individual capacity. But its rights are rarely or never used; it would be too much afraid of lessening the native ferocity of the urchins—a ferocity which makes them bold and indomitable. A Navajo said that if he were to venture to correct his son, the boy would let fly an arrow at him from behind a tree.[3] Just think! The youth must be endowed with all the virtues of a brigand. And, not to go too far afield, a soldier amongst the Mexicans makes a poor figure beside a highwayman;[4] yet the soldier prides himself, more often than not, on being no stranger to the noble profession of brigandage.

In so primitive a social state there is no room for the feeble. The strong have not enough for themselves; how

[1] Oviedo.
[2] Schmitz.
[3] Bancroft, *Native Races.*
[4] Dixon, *White Conquest.*

could they be encumbered with the weak? However, some of those crippled in previous affrays manage to maintain themselves for a time; they follow the expeditions as they can; if they arrive too late to share in the pillage so much the worse for them! *Tarde venientibus ossa.* The laggards can but die. Some few, however, find refuge with better supplied neighbours, who can be more compassionate. Now and again sturdier comrades, friends or children perhaps, are kind enough to kill the unfortunate wretch with a spear thrust, or to suffocate him by laying him on his back whilst two good-natured persons bear hard on the ends of a stick laid across his throat.[1]

Under such conditions the sick have no better chance than amongst our friends the Tchouktches; they become a burden upon the community, which prefers that they should not beat about the bush, but get well or disappear promptly. It sets itself to minister to the recovery of fever patients by dancing, singing, and beating drums the whole night through—a proceeding no less rational and efficacious than that of relieving the poor and indigent by charity balls.

It but rarely happens that lamentation is made for the dead; he must be a person of note for his obsequies to be conducted with anything like solemnity. In general the corpse is bound up in strips of skins, carried to a hill and buried upon the eastern slope; doubtless in the hope that the sun will look upon the departed and awake him when the time comes.

They have some notions about metempsychosis; certain souls go to animate birds or rattle-snakes.

They possess the small intellectual equipment common to most Red-skins; the notion of a Great Spirit, perhaps even of several; the tradition of a deluge, various legends. They venerate the bear, and those who belong to his totem will not eat his flesh; they hold sacred the owl, white birds, and, first and foremost, the eagle. An immense and

[1] Bancroft.

prodigious eagle sends forth the lightning by winking his eyes, and produces peals of thunder by flapping his wings. From him are descended the Apaches, for he united himself to their great mother Istal Naletche, who gave birth to Nahinec Gane and Toubal Lichine; this last was their ancestor, the hero who slew the serpent Python with his arrows, at the moment when the monster was about to devour him.[1] It is thus that these unfortunate Apaches tell the great myth of the eagle and serpent, of Ahi and Indra, that grand and ancient symbol which belongs equally to the old world and the new. But this is too vast and complicated a subject to touch upon here.

Travellers have refused all poetic and religious sentiment to these hordes. This is not surprising. Savages are, as far as possible, silent as to the facts of their inner consciousness; they do not care to explain themselves as to the things which most intimately concern them; and the whites imperturbably deny everything they have not seen, everything they have not been able to divine.

Spanish missionaries tried to convert these unfortunate Indians, but were obliged to give it up, for the same reason that caused the failure of analogous attempts amongst the Tasmanians, when these last were still in existence. The teaching was addressed to limited intelligences, destitute of the faculty of abstraction which long culture has developed amongst ourselves. What must have been the embarrassment of an honest apostle setting forth the doctrine of the Resurrection in a language where the idea of a soul has no other equivalent than the word "gut"! To make these savages understand that they had an "immortal soul," he was obliged to explain that in their bellies there was "one entrail which cannot rot." He made them count up to ten, but was not able to inculcate the dogma of the Trinity. How could the reverend fathers translate into a

[1] Malte-Brun, *Annales*, 1863.

language where the verb *to be* does not exist, the celebrated definition of the Eternal Jehovah—"I am that I am"?

The Red-skins speak very little, and the Apaches less than the rest; they prefer to explain themselves by gesticulation. Some of them have been observed crouching round a fire and holding a long conversation, wherein they did nothing but move the lips;[1] a method which we have adopted for the instruction of deaf-mutes. The Apache language abounds in nasal and guttural sounds and smackings made with the tongue, which foreigners cannot always succeed in imitating; the idiom is decidedly disagreeable, and yet their immediate neighbours, the Mohaves, have a soft and sonorous speech, as harmonious as Italian or Japanese.[2] Let us note in passing the absence of all salutations, of any formula of welcome, or of farewell.[3]

As morality, at least in its broad lines, is commensurate with the development of intelligence, it is not surprising to find it here reduced to its rudiments. These unhappy folk live almost entirely by plunder; their raids are complicated by rape and murder; their fights are less contests than assassinations. They glory in rapine, murder, and massacre; and despise as a degenerate race, and slaves of their own ease, all those who know not how to live in the savage independence of the desert. The strongest, the swiftest, the most beautiful of animals, are, they think, those which are ferocious and prey upon others, and the noblest of our species is the hunter of men.

They are spoken of as treacherous and cunning, qualifications they regard as flattering; but they protest against the charges of cowardice which are heaped upon them. Courage and cowardice do not belong to the order of simple facts. A certain cowardice requires a certain courage. Doubtless these rascals attack no one so long as they do not believe

[1] Coroados, Heusel, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1869.
[2] Gatschet, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1877. Buchner, Schmitz.
[3] Helfft, *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*, 1858.

themselves the stronger; having no taste for heroic strife, they prefer to lead their foe into a trap or to spring upon him from behind, a proceeding recommended by the best strategy and practised by all beasts of prey; these hunters have learnt dissimulation from their game. If they make prisoners, they carry off the girls and women, and especially the little boys, whom they need to fill the gaps left by death or misadventure in their ranks—gaps which the by no means numerous births are not enough to fill. In consequence of the privations and excessive hardships of the parents' life, the children are born less sturdy than is supposed; their constitution is seldom sufficiently robust to enable them to reach the age of forty.[1] Several whites whom they have captured, and whose strength or valour they have appreciated, have been obliged to beget a scion from a daughter of the tribe, that the good seed might be preserved.[2] But this service has not always redeemed the captive from torture and death; for these savages take a delight in making their prisoners undergo abominable torments, as Chateaubriand has already described in his *Vierge des dernières amours.*

Cruel they certainly are. But, without extenuating their guilt, let us state the fact that they know how to bear the anguish they inflict. And they do not take it ill if they are made to undergo it, should they have the misfortune to let themselves be captured. It must also be set down to their account that almost their only recreation is to "bay the moon," and that they feel the need for some more moving dramatic performances. Having none that are simulated, they fall back upon the real, for they have no theatres for drama and melodrama. Even they feel the need to contemplate the hero grappling with adversity, "the pleasure of the gods," according to Stoic doctrine, the grandest spectacle upon which it has been given to man to gaze. This may also explain the success of auto-da-fés, and of the thousand

[1] Fossey, *Mexique.* [2] Henry.

torments which, until quite lately, we have inflicted upon the heterodox and upon free-thinkers. These wretched Redskins, not having any actors to play a part, or executioners delegated by the magistrature, are obliged to do and suffer in their own person, to flay the martyr or roast the delinquent over a slow fire themselves. Do not let us forget that when the restorative functions of nutrition are accomplished the human animal is still unsatisfied; intelligence and imagination put in a claim to be considered; sensibility refuses to remain inactive, and demands its quota of emotion. For "man does not live by bread alone."

It is impossible to be less hampered as an individual by any sort of government than our Apache. He is not responsible to any one whatever; he always does what he wishes; that is to say, what he can. In the case of an expedition, they unite under the command of a comrade of striking personal superiority, whose authority ends with the enterprise. If hostilities are prolonged, it naturally occurs that the influence of the War-Chief often grows greater than is desirable.[1] Some tribes provide against this danger beforehand, by recognising a purely moral authority in their *Sachems* or Peace-Chiefs, personages always distinct from the military captains; a most interesting institution, but one which it is difficult to study to any purpose amongst these scattered hordes.

These primitive folk celebrate the Neomenia, and it is the loftiest manifestation of public life in their deserts. As far as can be known, the veneration of the Moon has everywhere preceded the veneration of the Sun. On the night of the festival they light fires on various spots. (In this connection let us remark that most, if not all, Indian tribes appear to have honoured fire, at all events, by certain rites.) They have supplied themselves with tobacco, and an intoxicating drink made with cactus juice, or with boiled and fermented corn;[2] if they did not smoke and get drunk

[1] Henry. [2] *Ibid.*

they would not believe themselves worthily prepared for a religious act. Lying or squatting, they await in profound silence the apparition of the Queen of Night. When she is seen upon the horizon they whine in chorus, imitating the cries of the coyote when it scents carrion, and troops of these animals speedily reply from the distance.[1] This perfect imitation is the result of long practice. Several of their dialects have one and the same word to designate the singing of a man and the screech of a prairie dog; travellers have even seen an analogy between the speech of the one and the scream of the other.[2] Little by little the voices swell and break forth into yelps; one would suppose a pack in full cry, or baying the moon, which latter indeed is the case. The concert is continued by the hoarse call of the hyena-wolf and bear, the belling of the stag, the cries of all their brothers and cousins in the animal world, the neighing of horses and mules, even the braying of the ass; and then every one begins to laugh, or rather chuckle, for laughter implies a superior mental condition to any attained by these misery-degraded savages. Besides, the Red-skins seem but little inclined to mirth; those of North America are considered melancholy, and those of South America gloomy. "The Indian is always gloomy. Gloomy at church, gloomy when he saddles his horse, gloomy when he drinks, gloomy when he dances, gloomy whilst he is courting his fair; even his love-song is nothing but a wail."[3]

Be this as it may, the cries become more extravagant from scene to scene, from act to act, until with the help of drink the representation degenerates into mere ribaldry which does not come to an end until the morning.

Buffoonery notwithstanding, we see a religious act, a true mystery, in this performance. These hunters are addressing themselves to the supernatural, that they may thereby be

[1] *Tiswin*, Murphy, *Indian Affairs*, 1857.

[2] Oscar Loew, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1877. [3] Wiener, *Pérou.*

put in close relation with animals, to the end that game may flourish and abound, and suffer itself to be taken. We look upon this solemnity as an equivalent of the "Bison Dance," described by Catlin, and common amongst the Mandanes and most of the Red-skins; of the "Bladder Festival" which we have found amongst the Aleutians; and of the festivities of "the stag," celebrated by the ancient Romans, in the disguise of wild beasts, during the Lupercalia and Saturnalia at the New Year.[1] The descendants of Kelts, Germans, and Scandinavians took a long time to discard this custom under the pressure of the Christian Church, which, by its councils and synods, its homilies and penances, ceased not to admonish and chastise the superstitious who on "Christmas and other days" obstinately persisted in "running after heifers,"[2] acting the buck or the bull-calf. The Greek faith is more pliant, and leaves carnival masquerades alone; they are the grand diversion of the moujiks, who put their whole hearts into them. All the rollicking knaves and leading spirits in the village assume the skin and character of some animal, and the jovial band, accompanied by musicians, makes a pilgrimage to all the public-houses. At its head, as is meet and right, dances the Bear, with his lady-wife, amid the frolics of wanton cubs of both sexes. Then the lordly Bull, with his corpulent mate, and a numerous family of calves. Next, Mr. and Mrs. Wolf and the wolf cubs; Mr. and Mrs. Fox and the little foxes;—the whole Noah's ark which follows may be imagined. The procession is closed by a camel with a majestic hump.

I have spoken of the Apaches as of a people still in existence, still possessing some influence; in reality they are no longer of any account. So long as they were but savages amongst other savages, they kept up their

[1] *Solemnitas Cervuli*, according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

[2] St. Firmin, quoted in *Mélusine*, ii.

population, such as it was, despite the slight fertility of their women, despite the chances of battle; but when from their mountain heights they began to distinguish the smoky track of the locomotive, their death-warrant was signed. Eager to enjoy, devoured by desire, inventing its own needs, our civilisation extirpates the tribes it invades, because they cannot instantly bend themselves to the transformation which has cost us twenty centuries. Now peoples composed of hunters, like the Red-skins, are recalcitrant to our culture. Not that they are unintelligent, but that their intelligence is resolutely confined to a speciality. Born a hunter, the Apache will die a hunter. Moreover, he is a nomad, and as the wisdom of the nations has said, "a rolling stone gathers no moss." Whilst the body has no fixed abode, the mind can with difficulty find an abiding place, with difficulty accustom itself to the long reflection, the patient study by which the secrets of nature are wrested from her. Without the least harshness, without any desire to "degrade him beneath the level of the brute," it may be doubted if the intelligence of the Apache is really superior to that of the beaver, or indeed equal to that of the ants, who know, we are told, how to harvest seeds, and even how to sow them. One of these Indian centaurs was asked why he did not plant maize as a security against the mischances of the chase, a thing which the Pueblos, whom he well knew, have done from time immemorial. "Plant maize? That my companions may eat the harvest on the stalk, before it gets ripe?"[1]

They do not know how to till the soil, and they do not wish to know; but they pillage those who do till—an unpardonable crime. The farmers are discontented that the Government of Washington is—officially—in favour of a humane policy; it cantons the Apaches in a portion of the territory which formerly entirely belonged to them, and pays them an annuity of £60,000, to the great profit

[1] Loew, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1877.

of the Commissioners. The farmers think that the measures of the Mexican governor of Chihuahua were more manly and decided, when he set a price upon the scalps of the plunderers: £20 for each adult male, £10 for each woman, and £5 for each child. Scalp-hunters set to work and brought back a quantity of these spoils, but their services were dispensed with when it was perceived that they gave in too many suspicious heads; whites being more easy to assassinate than Indians.[1] Arizona, Sonora, and California decided that all the Indians should be shot down. In 1864 the Pale Faces organised an expedition against the Payotes, and in a "splendid battue" killed two hundred of them; they forced them to drown themselves in Owen's Lake.[2] Two years afterwards the authorities of Humboldt City concluded a treaty, which stipulated that the survivors should quit the district within seven days, on pain of death to all loiterers. "This treaty could not be more favourable to the Indians," concludes the local paper. On the 30th April 1871, after some conflict, the federal troops made some Apaches prisoners. This was a windfall to all the colonists of the vicinity; they assembled from every side, rushed upon the captives, and cut the throats of a hundred then and there.

"There are no two ways of proceeding against the Apaches; a well-thought-out and patient campaign is needful. As soon as they show themselves, let them be pursued back into their mountains, and tracked to their dens, that they may be shut up and starved there. Let their surrender be obtained by showing white flags or otherwise, and the instant they are taken let them be shot. Against them all means, be they of God or of man, are justifiable. This method might shock a philanthropist, but for a man of such soft fibre I can feel some pity but no respect. I advise him not to waste all his sympathy

[1] Kendall. [2] Loew.

upon the Apaches, and to keep some of it for tigers and rattle-snakes."[1]

Such advice was easily followed. The whites had recourse to every treason, to every cruelty. Poisoning by strychnine[2] and the dissemination of small-pox were so many doughty deeds amongst our pioneers, who paraded about with bridles decked with scalps they had themselves taken, and strings of teeth they had drawn from women whilst still alive.[3] One day at Denver, a volunteer returned carrying the heart of an Indian woman at the end of a stick. After killing her with a shot from his gun, he had opened her chest to tear out this trophy, which the wags in the streets of the town greeted with acclamation. Another evening Jack Dunkier, of Central City, was seen arriving, carrying at his saddle-bow the thigh of an Indian. This personage pretended that he had eaten no other food for two days. No one believed a word of this, but such bluster was only too significant. Another publicly boasted of having fried and eaten human cutlets.[4]

Conclusion: In 1820 the adult males amongst the Apache-Apaches were reckoned at 20,000; fifty years after, the number only reached 5000.

These horse-stealers and sheep-stealers will never be forgiven until they are exterminated down to the very last man. What the sheep-owner most hates in the world is a wolf, even when the wolf takes human shape. A wandering, hungry, thirsty race, a race tracked and hunted down, an enduring, crafty, passionate people, untamable by weariness or by suffering, the Apaches, the wolf tribe, will share the fate of wolves. The wolf will perish, eaten up by the sheep; the sheep is not what a vainglorious folk have imagined. The

[1] Sylvester Mowry, *Arizona and Sonora.*

[2] "*To strychnine*" is a local slang word signifying "to get rid of the Red-skins." *Europa*, 1872.

[3] Pumpelly, *Across America and Asia.*

[4] *Le Monde Pittoresque*, 1883.

sheep presses forward, irresistible, driving before him lions and tigers, driving before him man.

Man?

Yes, man. Ask those thousands of English, those thousands of Scotch, those thousands of Irish, who have been driven back into the sea by flocks of sheep, urged forward by certain noble lords and large proprietors.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NAIRS.—WARRIOR NOBILITY AND THE MATRIARCHATE.

LIKE an erratic block in the midst of a corn-field, like a menhir in the middle of a garden, raising its granite head above periwinkles, clematis, and climbing roses, so seem the Nairs, who in one of the most civilised states have retained with singular tenacity the custom of the Maternal Family, a custom which is among the most ancient within our knowledge, and apart from which it would be impossible to understand many primitive races. These prehistoric fragments, set in oriental civilisation, are not the least of the wonders of The Land of Diamonds and Gems.

Malabar or Malayalam (a Tamil word which means a "strip of earth at the mountain's foot") extends from Cape Comorin to Mangalore, between the Ghâts and the Indian Ocean. Plains there are few, and the soil much broken. The scenery is very like that which is so much admired in the Sandwich and other islands of Oceania.[1] Abundant rain gives a vigorous vegetation to this "Garden of the Peninsula." Flowers spring from the smallest clods; even the sand grows green. The sea waves bathe the feet of the cocoa-palms. Above the rice-fields, on every hillock, on every mound, rise groves of trees, mangoes, bamboos, immense bananas, red-flowering cashew, the trembling foliage of the pipulas, and papaws, with their great whorls of palm-like leaves.

In the midst of this verdure are pagodas and little white

[1] Clements Markham.

houses, above which the areca,[1] most graceful of palm-trees, sways its feathery branches to every breath of wind. Between the rice-fields and the cane brakes are avenues of aloes and pine-apples. The smallest village is approached beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees. Nature is fair, the skies kind, the earth generous. As Firdusi says, "The heat is fresh, the cold mild." Nowhere on earth has man less right to call or feel himself unhappy.

The fertile soil, besides producing splendid flowers and delicious fruits, gives birth to fine types of humanity, well-made men, shapely women. The population is mixed. Commerce and small industries have enriched Malabar and attracted many immigrants to this new Phœnicia. Brahmins have been grafted on a more or less close-grained native stock. Moplah Arabs and Malays have taken root in those parts which are frequented by Europeans. Amongst the latter the Portuguese came first, the Dutch followed, and now the English are there till further notice.

The aborigines are divided into numerous castes; first and foremost the aristocratic and warlike race of Nairs.[2] Though of Soudra origin, according to the Brahmins, they have made themselves military officers and civil administrators of all kinds. A little while ago the Nairs, with their sub-castes, formed a fifth of the population. The Tchermour[3] or Autochthones come at the bottom of the tree, and between them and the Nairs, the Tirs,[4] said to be emigrants from Ceylon; a nursery ground of artisans, cultivators, and servants, who from time immemorial have been to the Nairs serfs and retainers, *métayers* and tenants. The women, however modest and discreet, will wear no

[1] *Areca betel, jacktree,* called *jaqua* by the Portuguese, from the Tamil *Choulaka.*

[2] *Nairs, Nayos, Naimar,* guides, chiefs, or leaders.

[3] *Tcher,* earth, *mour, moucoul,* children.

[4] *Tayers, Tayars,* or *Chogans, Chagoouans, Chanars,* servants, or demon-worshippers.

garments above the waist; they are not prostitutes, they say, that they should cover their bosom. They are pretty, and have magnificent hair. English ladies, who engage them as nurses, have tried over and over again, in the name of British decorum, to make them wear a neckerchief, but have encountered the determined resistance which they themselves would have offered had they been asked to promenade the highways unclothed. At the end of the last century, in this same Malabar, the Sultan Tippoo wished to force clothing upon the Codiacru Malais, who gain a living by extracting palm juice; he even offered to furnish them with linen cloth every year at the cost of the State. The poor fellows pleaded that they could never be at the trouble of carrying rags upon their bodies. Their humble remonstrances being fruitless, they all decided to quit the country; on hearing of which the Sultan made up his mind to leave them at peace in their forests.[1] And indeed the Nairs also are very parsimonious in the matter of coverings; the women, even princesses, scarcely less so than the men.[2]

Besides their peculiar physiognomy and certain specialities of costume, the Brahmins are recognisable by their forelock, a tuft of hair thrown backward by every one else. The Nairs shave their heads, retaining only one thin, straight lock, knotted at the end, and spread flat over the cranium; the women have the good sense to respect their long, glossy, black tresses. With their olive-brown complexion, dainty extremities, graceful figure, noble bearing, and distinguished carriage, they are a gracious race, which, according to Richard Burton, singularly resembles the portraits given at the close of the last century as representative of the Pacific Islanders.

Nairs of the ancient type were so many Spartan warriors, so many knights of a Court of Love. All knew at least how to read and write, but the chief part of their education was carried on in the gymnasium and the fencing-school, where

[1] Dubois, *Mœurs de l'Inde.* [2] Duncan, *Asiatic Researches*, 1799.

they learnt to despise fatigue, to be careless of wounds, and to show an indomitable courage, often bordering upon foolish temerity. They went into battle almost naked, threw the javelin with equal address backward or forward, and drew the bow with such skill that their second shaft often split the first.[1] Their extraordinary agility made them the terror of every combat in forest or jungle. On the smallest provocation they devoted themselves to death, and having done so, one would hold his ground against a hundred. Those attached by the prince to his person made it a point of honour not to survive him. Let us hear Pyrard, who saw them in their prime:—

"The Nairs . . . are all lords of the land, and live on their revenues or the pension allowed them by the king. They are the handsomest, most shapely, best proportioned men I ever saw. They are of a dusky olive colour, and all tall and lusty; moreover, they are the best soldiers in the world, bold and courageous, extremely skilful in the use of arms, with limbs so agile and supple that they can throw themselves into every imaginable posture, and thus avoid or cunningly parry every possible stroke, whilst at the same time they spring upon the foe."[2]

In short, more brilliant soldiers have never been seen; and their pride was no trifle. They felt themselves under the necessity of slaying, or perishing in the attempt to slay, every individual of inferior caste who took the liberty of touching or even breathing upon them.[3] Down to the present day, when the police give them plebeian prisoners to guard, it is amusing to see how afraid they are to go near them, thinking of nothing but how to keep their distance.[4] One might almost think they feared their captives. They have been known to refuse battle to unworthy foes; it would have been a want of proper respect to confront them with nothing but Tayeurs, and up to the end of

[1] Graul, *Reise nach Ost Indien.*

[2] *Voyage de François Pyrard* (at the beginning of the 17th century).

[3] Thévenot.

[4] Day, *The Land of the Permauls.*

the last century a prince would have feared to give mortal offence by sending them against simple commoners, the mere rank and file, the nobodies. This vanity is not peculiar to the Nairs; all aristocratic armies have had their dose of it.

"At the battle of Bouvines the chivalry of Flanders, after having overthrown some men-at-arms, passed them by, not wishing to fight except amongst gentlemen."[1]

"They were indignant that the first charge directed against them was not that of the knights, as would have been seemly, but that of the men of Soissons, led by one Garin. They showed an extreme repugnance to defend themselves, for it is in the last degree disgraceful for men of noble blood to be conquered by children of the people. They remained therefore motionless at their post."[2]

The imprisonment of a Nair was forbidden. If his honour were tarnished by an accusation, he would clear himself by the ordeal: seizing red-hot iron and carrying it to a certain distance, plunging his hand into boiling oil, or bathing in an alligator tank. Was the accusation proved? The king's messengers were charged to kill him wherever he might be found, provided they pinned the death-warrant to the corpse.

Honour and gallantry! Love and battle! My sword and my mistress! These were their devices, and they were ticklish sticklers for the point of honour. Detail to be noted: the interested parties did not always settle their quarrel in person; friends espoused it on their behalf, especially when the affair involved a civil dispute where considerable interests were at stake. The seconds took their time, practised their fence, set their own affairs in order; the encounter could even be adjourned for a period not exceeding twelve years. These affairs of honour, and judicial duels in general, produced a revenue for the king,

[1] Rigord, *Vie de Philippe-Auguste.*
[2] Guillaume le Breton, *La Philippide.*

the official arbitrator, whose intervention was paid according to the fortune of the litigants.

Precautions were formerly taken in Malayalam against the danger of the state falling into senile hands, and against its most important affairs being decided by a maniac. The constitution demanded that a prince who had reigned for twelve years should not govern a day longer; the Child of the Sun must enter upon his rest after having laboured for a whole cycle. At the last hour he presented his successor to the people and thereupon stabbed himself.

The custom must have had its reason, for it is in force amongst other peoples, notably in Africa. But, as may be imagined, autocrats have small taste for this system, and change it if they can. The sovereign of the Toltecs succeeded in obtaining very reasonable latitude; before causing him to perish, his people allowed him a reign of fifty-two years, the whole duration of the Mexican cycle. The bull Apis enjoyed his divinity for twenty-five years.

To close the monarch's career with due dignity, a grand jubilee and magnificent festival was announced at Calicut. On the great day the king himself inaugurated his own obsequies, and walking at the head of a procession of the highest officers of state, descended to the sea-shore. When his feet touched the water he flung down his arms, laid aside his crown, stripped off his garments, and seated himself with folded arms upon a cushion. Whereupon four Nairs, whom he had specially entreated to do him that last service—*i.e.*, to cut his throat—bathed in the sea, just beside the prince. Brahmins purified them, clothed them in gala costume, powdered them with saffron, sprinkled them with perfumed water, then restored to them sword and buckler. To the shout of "Upon them!" the champions flung themselves upon the guards ranged around the king in close battalions, thrusting right and left and striving to force a passage to the man seated on the cushion. Credible or not, the legend affirms that more than one

of these madmen plunged his sword into the royal bosom. It only remained for the conqueror to mount the throne he had so dearly bought. After all, if the prince were unpopular, the regiments disloyal, and a convenient awkwardness in defence previously decided on . . . ?

It appears that in ancient times the Aryans sent to Malayalam colonies, led by priests, who took possession of the country and enslaved the inhabitants without encountering any serious resistance. The facility of this conquest may be gathered from legends, according to which Vishnu causes the earth to rise from the waves and meet the newcomers. They were not forced to divide the spoil with the Kchatryas or warriors, who elsewhere counterbalanced the power of the Brahmins, and obliged them to keep up a continual struggle, in which victory alternated with the most cruel reverses. But easy conquest is in itself a danger. Having to reckon with neither enemies nor rivals, the victors turned their wits and their energies against one another. Priestly lords picked quarrels with lordly priests. These saintly personages pillaged and destroyed each other until, mutually self-enfeebled, they were obliged to accept the sovereignty of a temporal prince residing at Qadesh. Such misfortunes, which are customary in theocracies, are inexplicable, it is said. But these intestine dissensions gave the indigenous element a chance to recover itself by degrees, and finally it gave birth to the military aristocracy, called Nairs. Arab traders, taking up their abode in the ports, at the same time enriched themselves and the country, which they made an emporium for the merchandise of Europe and Africa, of the Deccan, Persia, and China. Little by little these displaced the centre of gravity in Malayalam; caused the balance of power to dip. As sectaries of Islam they were on better terms with the children of the soil than wi[illegible] Brahmins fanatical for Veda orthodoxy. So that, in [illegible] second half of the twelfth century, a revolution bro[illegible]

The common people, the local aristocracy, and the foreign merchants combined their forces and overthrew the reign of the priests. Tcher Rouman, an historical or legendary personage, whose name indicates a representative of the "men of the soil," assembled armies, fought battles, gained victories. The sacerdotal faction suffered the penalty of that pride which had forbidden them to mingle with the nation: the nation shook off their yoke and forced them to own themselves conquered, to come to terms. Tcher Rouman divided the country into twelve districts under twelve governors, having their seats in twelve towns, the most ancient of which, Quilon, was reserved for the fallen Brahmins, who accepted or pretended to accept the new state of things. Nannour, the Cannanore of our maps, where the revolution had originated, became remarkable for its essentially indigenous character. A thirteenth city, Coricot, or Calicut,[1] was founded, and set apart to become the centre of Arab trade, the headquarters of the new federation, and the residence of its president, who assumed the title of Grand Tamul.[2] The succession to the throne, which had hitherto been from father to son, in accordance with the law of the conquerors, was henceforth restored to the sister's son, in conformity with primitive custom.

It is obvious that the revolution which ended Brahmin rule was social in its origin. Until that time an irreconcilable strife between two systems had been carried on from generation to generation, between the patriarchate of the privileged race and the essentially popular and democratic matriarchate. Despite their strength and cunning, the Brahmins were powerless definitely to impose upon their Malabar subjects the custom which draws a line of demarcation between two worlds: that of the peoples who have a history, and that of

[1] From whence came the first *calico* stuffs.

[2] Or *Tambouri, Tamouri*, better known to us under the Arabic form *Zamorine*. The princes were called *Tambouran*, and the princesses *Tamburetti*.

the peoples who have none. It appears as if the great custom whereon our modern civilisations are founded, ought to have imposed itself, or commended itself without serious strife, if it really possessed the superiority it claims. But we must not anticipate explanations to be given later.

The democratic revolution triumphed over the aristocratic system; it did more, it held its ground, and the country entered upon a period of prosperity. At the end of the thirteenth century, Marco Polo was astonished at the wealth of the towns, the richness of the soil; a prosperity again admired by Camoens and the Portuguese in the middle of the sixteenth century.

"At Calicut, the Samori or Zamorine is one of the richest princes of India. He can put 150,000 Nairs under arms, not including the Malabars and Mahometans, from his own kingdom as well as from all the pirates and corsairs of the country, who are numberless. All the Nair kings on this coast are his vassals, obey him and yield to his might; save him of Cochin, with whom he is almost always at war since the Portuguese came to Cochin."[1]

The earliest pacific invasion of the Portuguese struck a blow at the existence of the confederation, afterwards disintegrated by the Dutch and the French. Finally the English succeeded in its entire conquest.

Three religions have exerted their influence in Malabar against the maternal family: that of Brahma, that of the Gospel, that of Mahomet.

According to a legend, difficult to prove or to refute, St. Thomas came to these parts, where his preaching won him the palm of martyrdom. Evidence, the following fact: the earth of his place of execution remained red. Pilgrims to whom this clay is administered are immediately cured of their fevers and other maladies.[2] A prodigy resembling that at Tantah in Egypt, where a field long continued to be

[1] *Voyage de François Fyrard.* [2] Marco Polo.

reddened by the blood of martyrs, beheaded to the number of eighty thousand on the same spot.[1] The glory of St. Thomas penetrated as far as Merovingian Gaul, and St. Gregory, writing in the city of Tours, relates that in the mortuary chapel of the Apostle, "a lamp, placed before the tomb, burns day and night without a wick and without being fed by oil. The wind does not extinguish it, it is never overturned, and gives light without being consumed; for it is supplied by a virtue from the Apostle, unknown to man, but wherein may be felt the divine power."[2]

It is interesting to hear travellers upon these Thomist Christians, also called Jacobites. They have a quantity of books treating of sorcery, by means of which they assert that their priests can do whatever they like, and the devils will obey them.[3] They invoke saints and pray for the dead, but are ignorant of Purgatory. Their holy water is gifted with miraculous properties, doubtless because it has been mixed with the above-named red earth. They reject transubstantiation, communicate with arrack for wine[4] and leavened wheaten bread, seasoned with oil and salt. The little cake is consecrated by being caused to fall upon the altar, through a hole arranged in the ceiling.

Like the primitive church, they used to celebrate Love Feasts with bloodless viands, rice, pastry, honey, sugar-cane. To baptise their children they branded the sign of the cross on their brow with red-hot iron (a custom said to have been long preserved by the Christians of Abyssinia), and when they had thus marked them, they caused them, even if still at the breast, to communicate in both kinds.[5] The priests, who are called Kassanar,[6] are married, and wear a long

[1] Paul Lucas.

[2] Gregorius Turonensis, *De Gloria Martyrum.*

[3] Tavernier, *Voyages*, i.

[4] Paoli.

[5] R. P. Philippi, *Itinerarium Orientale.*

[6] From the Syriac *Quasi*, ecclesiastic, and the Tamil *Nar*, *Nair*, chief: hence the *Nairs.*

beard. On Good Friday they put out Judas Iscariot's eyes: at dessert a cake is brought, and all run a knife into it; when each has stabbed it in turn, the confection is devoured. At Easter the faithful set forth their great sins for the year on pieces of paper, with which they load a bamboo cannon; the discharge disperses all the faults of the community into the air, and there will be no further question of them.[1] In the census of 1872 the Jacobites were computed at 400,000.[2]

In the days of their early fervour the new converts, imbued with doctrines brought from Syria and Armenia, thought of instituting a fresh order of things in Malabar; of abolishing the ancient matriarchate, and inaugurating a patriarchate more rigorous than the Brahmins'. They declared the female sex deprived of all rights of inheritance, and their descendants continue to give all to sons, nothing to daughters.

The Portuguese conquests gave at the outset a high position to the *Nasarani*, the Christian confraternity; who moreover had no need of protection. Commercial Calicut owed its prosperity, power and wealth to its tolerance of all forms of worship: "each one there enjoys great liberty of conscience," remarked Pyrard, who had not been accustomed to this spectacle amongst the Christians of Europe. In 1541 the marvellous Francis Xavier made his appearance, and, assisted only by some few companions, made the most astounding haul ever secured by the bark of St. Peter: five hundred thousand men in one cast of the net.[3] Baptisms were by the hundred, until many a time he complained of his aching arms. He also regretted his inability to understand anything said by his interesting neophytes. No doubt the sect might have constituted a powerful party in favour of the Lusitanians, and definitely secured their

[1] Day, *The Land of the Permauls.*
[2] *Allgemeine Zeitung*, v., 1880.
[3] Mrs. Guthrie, *My Year in an Indian Fort.*

dominion, had not the Western Christians conceived it their duty to tyrannise over their brethren of the East, to treat them as heretics, in exactly the same way as they did the brethren no less miraculously discovered in Abyssinia. The Jacobites committed the unpardonable crime of not immediately submitting to the Bishop of Rome; they persisted in rejecting the new Latin prayers, liturgies, and incantations, of which they did not understand a word, and preserving their Syriac formulas, which they understood no better, but which they declared had been dictated by our Lord Jesus Christ himself. They defended themselves by saying that the sacramental formulas lost force and efficacy upon undergoing the faintest change, were it merely in pronunciation. On both sides the obstinacy was greatest where the knowledge was least.

Things were completely at sixes and sevens when the Jesuits entered upon the scene. The Roman missioners ingratiated themselves with the princes, the inhabitants, even with the priests. They called themselves the Brahmins of the West,[1] dressed as Brahmins, ate like Brahmins, showed disgust for all that the Brahmins rejected, conformed to Brahmin practices and customs, and caused a council, devoted to their interests, to declare that the sacred cord worn by the Brahmins in their capacity of the regenerate, or "twice born," was destitute of all religious significance, and had but the value of a social, a purely social, distinction. They conceived the idea of dividing themselves into high caste and low caste Jesuits; and when a Jesuit borne in his palanquin met a Jesuit on foot, the two Jesuits pretended not to recognise one another. Striving to give a Brahminical colouring to their doctrines, they forged a fifth book of the Vedas, which they caused to be discovered as if by chance; the whole Christian revelation was contained in it. Brahminising

[1] R. P. Barreto, *Relation des Missions de la Province de Malabar.* Paris, 1645.

that the Brahmins might Christianise, they made such an amalgam of rites—Brahminico-Christian and Christo-Brahminical—that it became difficult to distinguish between Christ and Vishnu. And they too made converts by the thousand. No one has better put into practice St. Paul's precept, "Be all things to all men."

More rigorous, far more rigorous, the Carmelites and Dominicans vehemently reproved this conduct, not sparing such epithets as "perjured scoundrels." The Holy See knew not whom to believe. Both parties, however, were agreed in treating the poor Jacobites with inflexible severity. The exploits of the Santa Hermandad in Malabar and Ceylon, the stakes and auto-da-fés of Goa, have a melancholy celebrity. Many Jacobites took refuge abroad, the Bishop escaped to the mountains, whence his nickname of the "runaway prelate." The Inquisition laboured with such energy that it suppressed most of the heretics, that is to say, the primitive Christians.

The survivors, with a sigh of relief, welcomed the Dutch, who in 1663 took possession of Malabar. The Archbishop, in his turn, was forced to flee, but as he girded up his robes, he launched the thunders of excommunication against his brother the Syriac Bishop, and the whole of the ancient sect who claimed the Apostle Thomas as their founder. "Behold how sweet and blessed a thing it is when brethren dwell together in unity."

The Dutch in their turn came forward with a dogma; they insisted that justices of the peace and rural policemen should make a declaration of conformity to the Geneva Confession. Even when signing an ordinary agricultural lease it was necessary *to conform*.[1] The Articles of Dordrecht were repeated beneath the mangos, where the paroquets chattered and the pigeons cooed.

Thereupon came the English and substituted the action of Anglican clergy and missionaries for that of the pastors.

[1] *Journal of Evangelical Missions.*

But their propaganda lacked zeal, and was so lukewarm as to make their co-religionists indignant. Indeed the Christians disappeared as if by enchantment, so that in districts where they had been counted by the thousand not one was to be found.

Amidst all this tacking from side to side, the question of the matriarchate had been lost sight of. Despite the fury of its first attack, Christianity had not shaken that ancient institution. It is even permissible to suppose that if this faith made no greater progress during so long a period of existence, it was because it could not receive the support of those whom it excluded from property, to whom it refused any rights, and whose liberty and independence it curtailed. In no country, moreover, are women more influential and respected than in this. From time immemorial, the custom of Malabar has permitted no person of the feminine sex to be condemned to death; in extreme cases the female criminal was sent over the frontiers or sold as a slave.

Where the Cross had failed, Islam does not seem to have even attempted to contend. We have already seen how it formed an alliance with the indigenous element against Brahmin domination. Mussulman rigorists have never ceased to reproach the Arabs of Malayalam with the feebleness of their attempts to proselytise, their lukewarm opposition to a system evidently contrary to the law of Mahomet. Accepting what they felt themselves powerless to hinder, the immigrants had wedded natives, begotten the half-bred race of Mapillas,[1] and adopted, without appearing to be any the worse for it, inheritance in the female line; a system which makes the maternal uncle the head of the family. The Laccadive Mussulmans have done the same.[2]

But what was the "maternal family" which maintained itself amidst so many obstacles, through so many long ages,

[1] *Mapillas*, the remarkable ones.

[2] Hunter, *Imperial Gazetteer of India.*

and so many invasions, this family to which the Nairs and a large number of the children of Malabar showed themselves so deeply attached?

Since the memorable works of Bachofen and Mac-Lennan have opened new horizons to social science, it is known that mankind has emerged from its primal promiscuity under the influence, not of the paternal, but of the maternal family. For a long while paternity was ignored, for a long while the part of the man in the function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as impossible to determine. It was under the influence of the tangible fact of maternity that the notions of race, of family, of division and inheritance were elaborated and developed.

In the beginning all the women belonged to all the males of a tribe without distinction. Impossible to distinguish otherwise than by the mother amongst children who had no other father than the whole of the warriors, whence the maternal clans which so long existed without a rival. They are still in existence amongst most savage or semi-barbarous peoples; they were the rule amongst the ancient Etruscans, Campanians, Athenians, Argives, Arcadians, Pelagians, Lycians, and Carians, not to mention others. In the thirty-third year of Ptolemy Philadelphus, metronymy was still the law of Egypt; parties to a suit appeared in public documents as the sons of their mother, the father's name not being mentioned. The newly-married man even dropped his own name to take that of his wife,[1] gave up to her all he possessed to provide for her future family, and reserving nothing for his own private use, only asked to be supported until the end of his days, and then suitably interred.

As is the family, so is property. When property assumed form and consistence, its transmission was arranged for the benefit of the maternal lineage. "Matrimony" preceded

[1] Révillon, *Papyrus démotiques.*

"patrimony." Needless to recount the "custom of Barèges," or that of the ancient Iberians. Let us confine ourselves to British India.

"The Nicobarians prefer to have daughters rather than sons. It is not for the man to choose his companion and lead her to his hut, but for the woman to take a mate and bring him home with her. Parents who have only sons spend a dreary old age. Their boys leave them one by one, and they end their days in solitude; those who are fortunate enough to have daughters become the centre of a growing family."[1]

"Amongst the Khassias of the Garro Mountains, possessions pass from mother to daughter. The woman, directress of the community, superintends her property and her own household; she chooses a husband at her pleasure, and thinks little of divorcing him. It is true that the women work more than the men; it is they who carry travellers across the country in great panniers."[2]

"The Pani Kotches" (neighbours of the above) "give a privileged position to women, a position due to their greater activity and intelligence. It is their business to dig the soil, to sow and plant, as well as to spin, weave, and brew the beer; they refuse no task, and leave only the coarsest labour to men. The mother of the family marries her offspring at an early age; at the feast of betrothal she dispenses half as much again to the bride as to the bridegroom elect. As for the grown-up girls and the widows, they know very well how to find husbands; the wealthy never lack partners. The chosen one goes to reside with his mother-in-law, who both reigns and governs, with her daughter for prime minister. If the consort permits himself to incur expenses without special authorisation, he must meet them as best he can. Fathers of families have been known to be sold as slaves, the wife refusing to pay

[1] Vogel, *Vom indischen Ocean bis zum Goldlande.*

[2] Steel, *Journal of the Ethnological Society*, vii. Campbell.

the penalties they had incurred. Under these circumstances it was lawful for her to marry again."[1]

No people have more fully appreciated the maternal family nor developed it more logically than the Nairs, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent, and moreover victorious.

How could the proud caste of Brahmins, with their refined intelligence, renounce the attempt to dominate and exploit a simple and artless population? Between patriarchate and matriarchate, two opposing systems of affiliation, a reconciliation appeared impossible, unattainable. They have circumvented the difficulty with an ingenuity and perseverance worthy of a sacerdotal race. They were forced to recognise that the indigenous population had decided against their family system. To impose it afresh, impossible. And yet their law was explicit: they could not give up affiliation through the father without disinheriting themselves, without owning themselves mistaken. We shall see how they set to work.

The Nairs loved their family more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindoos, they held reprehensible the man who deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of children; they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother;[2] those who had not reproduced their species were devoted to terrible punishments in the next world. The Eleven Thousand Virgins, the glory of Cologne, did well to present themselves before St. Peter, who received them with honour into the Christian Paradise; they never would have crossed the threshold of the Tamil Paradise. Malabar maidens are married in their twelfth year, and even earlier. An astrologer

[1] Hodgson, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1849. Dalton.

[2] "If a girl, having reached a marriageable age, died without having had connection with a man, the prejudices of the caste exacted that the lifeless corpse should be submitted to a monstrous copulation."—Abbé Dubois, *Mœurs de l'Inde.*

chooses a lucky day for the festival, which is celebrated with great pomp. Musicians and actors, acrobats and male and female dancers, are assembled. Relatives and friends from far and near are present. The visitors are received by the bride's uncle and brothers, and presented to her mother and sisters, arrayed in their best. The young lady and the gentleman who has been chosen as her husband make their entrance. A golden chain, connecting two slender collars, is fastened upon their necks with much ceremony, and thus fettered to one another they pass up and down before the assembly. After a few turns they are set free, but the husband forthwith ties round the wife's neck the *tali*, the Hindoo equivalent of our wedding-ring. It is a cord to which some symbolic trifle has been attached; here a precious stone, there gold leaf rolled into a horn with a silken thread running through it. Directly the *tali* is fastened the young people are declared to be one in the name of the law, and the entertainments begin. After four or five days of festivities, the wedding guests are dismissed, and with them the bridegroom. He is courteously thanked for his services: "We defray your expenses, we give you a complete outfit as a present, and we slip half-a-sovereign into your hand; after which you are in honour bound no longer to encumber the conjugal chamber with your presence."

A semi-Brahmin, a sort of Franciscan or Capuchin (or a scripture-reader, as we might say), sometimes consents to present the *tali* in person; but having done this honour to the bride, he refuses any further service, and a paid contractor is called in to consummate the marriage. Marco Polo, who was much astonished by these nuptials, narrates in substance as follows:—

The Patamares, long-shore men and wharfingers, hired for the occasion, bargain for their services, and haggle over the remuneration; if their prices are too high, Arabs and foreigners are called in. They undertake the service required

gratis, and willingly, and would be preferred to all others, did they know how to take their departure at the right time. More than one well-favoured traveller has been astonished by the proposition that he should then and there wed some charming creature; but after the marriage, the family will make their bow and give him to understand that it will be indiscreet to remain longer, and dangerous to return. Yet the bride will wear the precious *tali* round her neck for life, only leaving it off if the man who has given it to her should die. In that case she will put on mourning, purify herself, and bathe; after which the affair is over and done with."

It must be owned that this does not much resemble the heart-rending stories we have been told of the "Malabar Widow."

Let us stop for a moment, to state that these strange marriages are evidently a relic of the Brahminical period, when the conquerors were striving to impose their institutions upon people who would none of them. Perhaps the heads of families amongst the inhabitants may have been maltreated if they could not prove that they had satisfied the prescriptions of legal marriage. They rose to the occasion, and married for form's sake, the betrothed pair agreeing not to take seriously the engagement they had contracted. Did the civil officials require marriage certificates? The certificates were handed in, but no police could force the newly-married pair to regard each other with affection, or constrain the father to trouble about children indifferent to him. It was all very well to declare him the genuine author of his offspring; he shrugged his shoulders; for paternity goes for nothing in these lands, where all children have a mother, but no father. It is not that the relationship is always uncertain. There are princesses, great and powerful ladies, who take a fancy to have a titular lover, and even to have only one. At Cannour, Buchanan went to pay his respects to the Bibi, who received him graciously, and presented to him the

father of her children. At the state dinner given to the traveller, the Queen's consort ate in the kitchen. Princes and kings had mistresses upon whose fidelity they could rely, and whom they kept for life; but the children were not reckoned of the blood royal, and belonged to the family of the mother, and to that only. Until now we have believed the joys of paternity the sweetest and deepest of all delights. Here are men to whom they are unknown. We have believed paternal love a natural feeling. It is merely an acquired idea.

Marriage elsewhere is, or has been, the taking possession of the woman by the man. The custom of Malabar[1] is an exception to the rule; the nuptials are here interposed only to emancipate the woman, and introduce her into the world. She takes a master to gain independence; with the contract of servitude in her hand she acquires personal liberty. Provided she wears her *tali* round her neck, she is free of conjugal bonds. It is not the first time that a symbol has been seen to transform itself into its opposite, an institution that has changed its nature and reversed its significance.

The emancipated wife lives with her mother, or at a pinch with one of her brothers, unless she prefers to set up housekeeping for herself. She intends to lead a merry life, and unite herself with whom she pleases, except with her lawful husband. That would be a slip for which public opinion would never pardon her.

The first introductions are made by her mother and maternal uncle, her two protectors. In the north of Malayalam, which has advanced further towards the paternal family, it is not considered suitable for a lady to have more than one gallant at a time. But in the south, the customs of which I am more especially describing, the more admirers a woman has the more she is esteemed—four, five, six, seven; but not more than ten or twelve. Everything has its limits.

[1] Known as the *Marrou Moka tayoum*.

Reciprocal propriety demands that each shall be the privileged guest for twenty-four hours, a week, a decade, or half a decade. Does the king of the hour desire to keep away visitors—to be rid of intruders? He hangs up his shield at the door, or sticks his sword or his knife there.[1] Every one knows what is meant.

And what is to be done beyond the service of the queen? What one pleases. A man on duty for the week in one group is free to solicit the same office in any others; he presents himself, is accepted or refused, goes and comes, departs and returns. Where there is restraint there is no pleasure. The shareholders in these companies of floating capital contribute each man his quota towards the expenses of the establishment. One looks to the provisions, another to the beverages, one to the stable, another to the garden. The lover-in-chief—the favoured one—has charge of the wardrobe; no very irksome task, for in that charming climate no one dresses much; the less clothing the more pearls and jewels to display. The women pay great attention to their hair; they are admired for their graceful figures, modest and pleasing appearance, and amiable manners. Presents are, on principle, not costly. It is recognised that the fair should be enabled to lead a comfortable life (as comfort is there understood), but nothing more, for they desire to be amused but not to be enriched. If a woman is at liberty to have her dozen of cavaliers, the cavaliers in their turn are free to have as many mistresses, amongst whom they share their stock of clothing, arms, horses, and personal possessions. When a girl returns to her favourite a robe with which he has presented her, he understands that his visits are to cease, and seeks his fortunes elsewhere.

It has been asserted that this sort of life was contrived by sovereigns and legislators for the purpose of creating a warrior aristocracy, careless of lucre, insensible to family

[1] Thévenot, *Voyage*, v.

cares or ambitions. But such a life cannot be invented. We must insist on the fact that these are the manners of nobles and gentlemen, smaller people having neither the fortune nor the leisure to live a life of which the motive power is not work but enjoyment. Such freedom of manners is the privilege of the ruling classes, their essential prerogative. A Nair gentleman is welcome to unite himself with one or another; a Nair lady to accord her favour as she pleases, but neither man nor woman will keep low company. Three centuries ago those who misallied themselves were killed, assassinated by their fellows. To-day infractions are not punished with death, but with dishonour. Elsewhere adultery is committed between individual and individual, here between caste and caste. "Between noble lord and honourable lady," to speak the language of the Seigneur de Brantôme, "nothing but honour; but a clown in the case, fie for shame!" The Zamorine might choose as his favourite any pretty girl of the nobility; each one would consider it joy and honour to please him; but it would never do for a princess to accord her favour to a boor.

Let us dwell upon the more interesting aspects of this Malabar family, still so primitive; inheritance from mother to daughter, and from the uncle to the children of the eldest sister;[1] the household directed by the mother or the eldest girl; polyandry and polygamy side by side or inextricably mixed, thanks to the institution of "associated homes." Thus each woman is the wife of several men, each of whom has in his turn several mistresses.

Speaking broadly, polygamy suits the wealthy and powerful, such as the Nairs of the best society, whilst polyandry is the resource of the poor, such as carpenters, founders, gold-workers, and smiths.[2] It follows that one is much

[1] The law called *Alya Santana*. Walhouse, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, 1874.

[2] Jacolliot.

more frequent than the other, as well in Malabar as in several other parts of India, notably Ceylon.[1] The simplest and most general form is adelphic polyandry, where several brothers are attached to a single woman. The five Pandavides had a wife in common, which by no means prevented each brother from trying his luck elsewhere, and contracting marriage on his own account; but all the wives they brought must accept the supremacy of the great, the incomparable Krishna Draupadi.[2] This custom being still sufficiently common, we will cite only some few examples from the past:—Arabia Felix, where the wife was common to all the brothers;[3] Sparta, where amongst poor families it was the same;[4] the Canaries.[5]

Several Nair brothers often arrange amongst themselves, as we have said, to keep one wife; as for their sisters, they live like hetairai, and, by a singular exception, a real social paradox, they must be married to enjoy freedom in their loves. An important observation: the conjugal is here dominated by the fraternal, or by adelphism. Relations between husband and wife, lover and mistress, are less intimate than between brothers and sisters. In our society, under the influence of "acquired ideas," the thing appears inexplicable, and almost contrary to nature; but yonder they do not even imagine that it could be otherwise.

The mother then reigns and governs; she has her eldest daughter for prime minister in the household, through whom all orders are transmitted to her little world. Formerly, in grand ceremonials, the reigning prince himself yielded precedence to his eldest daughter, and of course recognised still more humbly the priority of his mother, before whom he did not venture to seat himself until she had given him permission. Such was the rule from the palace to the humblest dwelling of a Nair. The brothers

[1] *Maha Bharata, Adi Parva.*
[2] Duncan, *Historical Remarks.*
[3] Strabo.
[4] Polybius and Xenophon.
[5] Béthencourt.

obeyed their eldest sister, and respected the younger ones, with whom they avoided remaining alone during early youth lest sensuality should overcome them. Relations vary according to age. The Tamil language, though it distinguishes the elder from the younger girls, and the younger according to their rank, has no expression answering to our generic word "sister." How many superficial observers might hasten to conclude that this ill-conditioned people had no fraternal affection!

Sons, however, are not obliged to live with their mother; they have the right to create a new home. Whoever likes, leaves the maternal roof, carrying with him his favourite sister to direct his household. If he take a wife, she will hold a secondary position, and owe submission and respect to her sister-in-law. Does strife arise? It is for the husband to take part against his companion, who will also sacrifice him where the interests of her own brother are concerned. If the husband die, the wife will immediately go away with her children; whatever may have been her attachment and fidelity to the departed, no thought of keeping her will be entertained. Conjugal love, a passing sentiment, think the Nairs; affection between brother and sister, a feeling that endures. The Nibelungen epic, in its primitive form,[1] bears witness to a similar state of things, which was perpetuated in several countries, notably Servia, as shown by its popular songs, and amongst the Yorubas of Abbeokuta, with whom the rights of a brother take precedence of those of a husband and even those of a father.[2]

Without declaiming against the prevailing customs of to-day; admitting that our civilised races have their own good reasons for doing as they do, it must be recognised that the custom of Malabar singularly simplifies the civil and criminal codes. No suits for adultery, for divorce,

[1] *The Icelandic.* Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe.*
[2] Townsend.

for separation of bed and board, no difficulties about inheritance. What a relief!

But how have the Brahmins comported themselves in face of an institution which overthrew them because they had tried to overthrow it? Could they recognise their mistake? Being priests—no! Accordingly they have not ceased to contest the point, to say that this custom is fit at best but for backward peoples and contemptible castes. As for themselves, they say they are more noble than kings, and the Tambourans do not reach to their ankles. It is enough for the nobles if a Pariah stops thirty-two paces off, but priests and the sons of priests insist on double the distance. They always pretend to be the legitimate sovereigns of the country. Before the English conquest the Zamorine believed himself, by the grace of God, autocrat and absolute master. What a mistake! If religion be not a liar, the last of the priests was infinitely his superior. "It is we," they said, when any one would listen, "it is we who are truly kings by divine right. This Tambouri, who calls himself a sovereign, is nothing but a usurper *de facto* and *de jure*. These Nairs, proud of their wealth and the exploits of their ancestors, are after all nothing but unclean Soudras. As for us, beings of superhuman essence, immortals disguised in a mortal envelope, we sojourn upon earth to visit our subjects and bestow our benefits upon them. And certainly we are good to them, do not even disdain to raise them above mere animalism by some drops of our precious blood; it is the prerogative of gods to scatter abroad their favours without too curiously regarding the spot where they may fall. And truly we are divine, being called *Manoushya Devâh*, the gods amongst men."

Could they forget that they were masters of the land, lords spiritual and temporal? A revolution, it is true, had overthrown them, but only six centuries before. Could that constitute a prescriptive hindrance? Speaking in the name

of "God who lives for ever," having their mouths full of the Eternal and eternity, sacerdotal persons measure time otherwise than the simple laity, over whom they have the great advantage of never accepting accomplished facts. Could the Brahmins of Travancore flatter themselves that they might reconquer their ancient Kerala? No, for it was conquered already. Provisionally, they have delegated the military authority. Every young noble, when he girds on the sword of knighthood, receives the injunction, "Protect cows, defend Brahmins." They say that they are infinitely superior to other men; they are considered to be so; should they not accept honour and ease; *otium cum dignitate?* They have taught the simple people, "If the Tambouris suffer annoyance upon earth, the holy Trimourti in the skies grow angry," and the simple people believe them.

"The plains at the foot of the Ghâts emerged from the sea at the command of Vishnu, who bequeathed them to his friends the Brahmins, on condition that the land should recede beneath the waves if it ceased to be ruled by princes of the Brahminical stock. The whole country must contribute from its revenues to the erection of temples and pious foundations, whence its sacred name *Kerm Baoumi*, the Land of Good Works."[1]

Another legend is told for the moralisation of the masses. It is of Nagas or serpents, earth-born serpents symbolising the aborigines. It runs as follows:—"The Nagas, cursed by their mother, had all been condemned to perish. They were being massacred, they were about to be exterminated down to the very last, when who should appear but the young Prince Astika, Brahmin by his father, Naga through his mother, consequently invested with every sort of right given by the patriarchate or conferred by the matriarchate. Astika took pity upon the unfortunates, obtained their pardon, and gathered together the wretched remnant.

[1] Duncan, *Asiatic Researches*, 1799.

Thus a child of the sun was graciously pleased to infuse his generous blood into the Helot race, sprung from the earth; his Brahmin descendants will work out the redemption."[1]

This legend, evidently invented to meet the exigencies of the cause, affords a key to Brahmin policy. "As these ingenuous matriarchal people will only acknowledge the mother, we will furnish them with fathers. The patriarchate shall use the matriarchate for its own benefit."

But how might this lofty aristocracy unite itself to Nairs, scarcely worthy to humbly kiss its hand?

How admirable is sacerdotal discretion! Only masters in casuistry know how to preserve virtue with such skill; only theologians can so dexterously steer the orthodox faith amongst rocks which would shipwreck vulgar morality. The law of Manu enjoined upon every pious man the duty of having a son, that the manes of his ancestors might be sustained by funereal sacrifices. The law does not enjoin several children, but permits them, saying that the younger ones are the issue not of duty but of pleasure. Well, our holy men have devoted this supererogatory progeny to the salvation of the inferior classes. As the transmission of the priestly office is from firstborn to firstborn, they marry their eldest son according to the sacred rites. As for the younger sons, they do not perpetuate the race, do not enter into "lawful marriage," but are good enough to contract temporary unions with "strange women;" they honour some few daughters of the inferior race with their benevolence. A Brahmin will give offspring to a Nair woman; never a Nair to a daughter of the Brahmins. In this way the rights of the patriarchate are scrupulously respected, whilst the best possible terms are preserved with the matriarchate.

Indifferent to paternity, of which they are ignorant, or which they scorn to recognise, the Nairs who have a

[1] *Maha Bharata, Adi Parva.*

heritage to bequeath—be it throne or palace or territorial possessions—have been taught by long tradition that those distinguished sorcerers, the priests, bring by their magic all sorts of prosperity to the houses they are obliging enough to enter. Great families would believe their importance impaired if each generation did not bring them an influx of consecrated blood. Gratefully they accept the services of junior priests, sons-in-law who come to furnish well-endowed uncles with heirs. The reigning prince received the handsome Eliakims with favour, caused them to be regaled, complimented them, thanked them for the great honour they were so good as to do his household. Afterwards he led the dandies of the sanctuary to the room where the "Bibi" and the princesses, her daughters, were already awaiting them, arrayed in their best. The young people made acquaintance, amused themselves, went for country expeditions, made love by moonlight; the next spring witnessed the hatching of a whole covey of little Tambourans. And the Bibi had no idea of being neglected. On the eve of her wedding she had been purified from her faults by a Brahmin,[1] who had received four or five hundred ducats for his services. When the husband travelled, he gave her in charge to certain priests, whom on his return he thanked for their extreme complaisance.[2] Pedro Cabral recounts[3] that at Calicut each of the two royal consorts received the attentions of ten Brahmins; a smaller number would have been beneath the royal dignity.

The higher nobility expect to be well supplied. The smaller gentry claim their share. The Levites resign themselves—but how great are the exigencies of the worship of Brahma! How many its acts of sacrifice! Let us only count them: the temple-dancers, Hierodules and Bayaderes, a rigorous duty, a sacred obligation; the Tambouretti; the

[1] Mounshi Abdoul Bahaman Khan, in the *Oriental Christian Spectator*, 1840.

[2] Thomas Herbert, *Voyages*, etc.

[3] *Collecçao de Noticias.*

princesses and court beauties; the gentle dames and dainty damsels of the provinces. The older the family, the higher its pretensions, the more attachment it shows to this custom. Naturalists are astonished at the devoted zeal with which robins, wagtails, and other birds bring up the nursling surreptitiously slipped by a cuckoo into their nests. Here the whole population solicits the cuckoo. After the lesser nobility, village chiefs put in a claim; large proprietors will not be forgotten, still less the wealthy middle-class. The men of God do what they can; it is enough. The least notable priests suffice for the small fry; for the middle-class, middle-aged ecclesiastics. It must be added that after having dispensed their charity to the poor women (in these parts amorous attentions are demanded and obtained for love of the Lord of Heaven), these pious personages require certain alms in money. And note how much more easy of approach the sacerdotal class shows itself than do the gentry! On no pretext whatever would a Nair of "the upper ten" enter upon any connection with a common girl or woman; but a priest rises above this weakness, partly bestowing charity, partly receiving it. Old clerks frequent women of the peasant and artisan classes; but without much zeal, for clowns and proletarians are often obliged to look after themselves. However, there is a little door behind the hut, which opens when a holy man comes to knock. Some poor metal utensils are carefully reserved for his exclusive use, for he could not eat, drink, or even wash with vessels contaminated by the contact of the common herd. It is permissible to touch a Soudra woman, but not the pitcher she carries from the fountain. One of these Brahmins complained to the missionary Weitbrecht of having no less than ten wives on his hands.[1]

"These Koulinne Brahmins[2] are thoroughbred stallions, upon whom it is incumbent to ennoble the race and to

[1] *Journal des Missions Evangéliques*, 1852.

[2] Dr. Roberts, *From Delhi to Bombay*, *Maulaïsseur*.

cohabit with virgins of inferior caste. The venerable personage scours town and country; the people give him presents in money and stuff; they wash his feet, drink some of the dirty water, and preserve the rest. After a repast of dainty meats, he is conducted to the nuptial couch, where, crowned with flowers, the virgin awaits him."

Those who are not admitted to such high honour entreat in all humility permission to kiss the body of the divine man,[1] the favour of a forehead marked by him with a drop of vermilion.[2]

All India is imbued with the belief that sacerdotal blood is gifted with regenerating virtues. The itinerant priests of Siva, known under the name of *djaugoumas*, are mostly celibates. When one of them does an adept the honour to enter his house, every male who inhabits it is obliged to go away and lodge elsewhere, leaving wives and daughters with the holy personage, who prolongs his sojourn as seems good to him.[3] The *Adi Parva* of the Maha Bharata abounds in stories of great princes and mighty heroes, who go and present their wives and daughters, bejewelled and magnificently arrayed, to some pious hermit, rich in penances, that he may deign to accord them a son of his good works. To begin with, there is the august Pandu, then King Bali, Vitchitravîrya, Vipaçman, Djarâsandha, Bhima, Khounti bhodja, and there are more.

We are exaggerating? Well, let us pass the frontier and enter Burmah, where the great families have a spiritual director, to whom they send their daughter before the wedding; "pay him the homage of the flower of virginity," according to the official phrase. The first night with the Cambodian bride belonged, or belongs still, to the priest, a worthy man, who will not allow his prayers to be disturbed by any and everybody.

[1] Picart, *Cérémonies Religieuses.*
[2] Tavernier, *Voyages*, etc.
[3] Dubois, *Mœurs d'Inde;* cf. Herbert, *Voyage*, ii.

Noble houses recognise his services with generous gifts and magnificent donations; it is not a case in which to be stingy. Middle-class families take measures beforehand to save the sum required; the poor collect it by subscriptions, or charitable souls advance it without interest, knowing that it shall be laid to their account in another world.[1] The Philippine Isles formerly possessed such priests, who were highly paid for their complaisance.[2] The Yezid Santons, who rendered a similar service, passed for public benefactors.[3] In Egypt many an ugly, dirty dervish is solicited by feminine zealots, assailed by a troup of pious women.[4] And at Nicaragua, in the New World, a girl does not marry without having passed a night in the temple with the priest.[5] But this is an incline where we must pull up; the subject is not one that can be exhausted in a page or two; let us merely recall that under the Empire, Roman ladies flung themselves into the arms of the Thaumaturgists, whom they took for quasi-divine beings,[6] able to bestow intenser pleasure and a superior progeny.

It was thus that the Brahmins continued to dominate, by means of religion, a people, who had nevertheless succeeded in throwing off their political yoke. Their sons are princes; their bastards hold the royal sceptre.

Under the conditions above described, children who see several men succeed one another in their mother's company, appearing and then disappearing, attach themselves to their maternal uncle as the real representative of the family; they attach themselves to him far more than to their own father, even when the latter has brought them up, a rare occurrence

[1] *Relation Chinoise*, translated by Abel de Rémusat; Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde;* Adolf Bastian.

[2] Démeunier, *L'esprit des Usages.*

[3] Creagh, *Armenians, Koords, and Turks.*

[4] *Mémoires du Chevalier d'Arvieux.*

[5] Bancroft, *The Native Races of America;* Andagoya.

[6] Lucian, *Alexander.*

amongst the upper classes. The philoprogenitiveness of our European moralists is entirely strange to a Nair, both in idea and in fact. He is taught from his earliest infancy that the uncle is a nearer relative than the father; that he ought to love his nephew better than his own son.[1]

In Ceylon, main reservoir of the Tamil population, the term uncle is considered more honourable than that of father; sorcerers and devil-dancers are addressed as "Uncles, venerable uncles,"[2] a title equivalent to that usual elsewhere, "Father, reverend father." "The nepotic law" regulates succession to the throne of Travancore, though the Maharajah gives himself out as a Kchatrya.[3] The same system obtains amongst the Ilawars of Cingalese origin. The neighbouring Tchanar often halve the inheritance between sons and nephews. But we are not going to enumerate all the peoples and tribes, who in India, and out of India, decree succession from uncle to nephew, or, in more archaic fashion, from mother to daughter. A man who should lose at once his son and his nephew (let us suppose them carried off by an epidemic) would be considered as wanting in natural affection if he manifested as much regret for his son as for his nephew, even if he had never seen this nephew, even if he had witnessed his son's birth and lavished his care upon him. We have taken an extreme case; but the maternal uncle is generally the real protector of the children, the man who, after having been their guide and counsellor during his whole life, bequeaths to them all he has. In familiar language, children call their uncle "him who nourishes," and their father "him who clothes." Taken literally, this designation would be often inexact, for some fathers provide their children with food as well as with clothing; but it shows how much more weight attaches to the uncle than to the father. The first bestows the appanage; the second

[1] Rich. Burton, *History of Sindh.*

[2] John Callaway, *The Practices of a Capua or Devil Priest.*

[3] Hunter, *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Marumakkatayam Law.

gives the "pin money," "*Chiamu babbu a chi mi da pane,*" is a Corsican proverb. The Malabar uncle distributes his movables in equal portions between nephews and nieces. As for the land, it is transmitted through women; the mother bequeaths it to her eldest daughter, with the understanding that the latter may confide its management to her eldest brother, who will divide the produce between the members of the family.

It is evil worse than death if the *matrimony* must be alienated, and there are but rare examples of it. Such a transfer is symbolised by the seller pouring a little pitcher of water, taken from the alienated land, over the hands of the buyer. As far as possible the aforesaid matrimony remains entire age after age. Division is avoided. Instead of calling for a partition, to be followed by a parcelling out of the land, the brothers arrange to live in the "brother-home" or common household. Some authors consider that the succession passes from the children of the eldest sister to those of the second, then to those of the third, and so forth; but it is more probable that the order is fixed between cousins in strict accordance with the date of their birth.

Despite so many precautions to prevent the extinction of families, an unlucky concatenation of circumstances may leave an inheritance vacant. What can a man do, who, having no sister and no nephews, sons of his sister, has no natural heirs? He will adopt a sister to perpetuate the family. And if the new sister remain childless? Well then, let her in her turn adopt some one! In that case, the matron will offer her breasts, just smeared over with milk, to the child brought to her. If the stomach retains the milk, the adoption is decided; but if it is returned, or the breast rejected, application must be made elsewhere, another heir or heiress sought.

Thus constituted, the family, however small its number, has scarcely ever any but an old man for its chief. The Zamorine was the oldest of a group of kinsfolk, containing nearly a hundred members. His enfeebled hands often

grew weary of holding the reins of government; then, preferring to give himself up to devotion, he would confide the direction of affairs to a regent, assisted by a council of state, always composed of five princes, his heirs-presumptive, whose ages consequently most nearly approached his own. Frequently the aged man called to authority had but time to inter his predecessor before he himself sank into his last sleep. These elders were generally of pacific character, which was so much the better for the people. Doubtless many cases of imbecility must have occurred after the sovereigns ceased to stab themselves at the end of a reign of twelve years, but no one thought of taking offence thereat. One of these Nair princes has never assassinated him who barred his way to the throne. This fact has not failed to be noticed in India, where patronymic dynasties have continually been torn to pieces by internal dissensions, affording their subjects an example of brothers slaughtering brothers, sons rebelling against fathers, fathers poisoning or blinding their sons. A contrast easy to explain: paternal right calls up terrible ambitions, creates inequalities, extreme disparities betwixt those who are nearest. The matriarchate is a law of equality, incites to neither hatred nor jealousy, tends to tranquillity and peace, apportions equally, save that in some places it is to the advantage of the younger.

To sum up. There is some good in this Malabar, though the inhabitants, with an irony that must not mislead us, call it the *Land of the Sixty-Four Abuses.* It deserves as much as China to be called the "Country of filial piety." In the Central Empire all civil and political institutions are derived from paternal right; here they proceed from maternal right. Proud and haughty warrior though he be, the Nair cheerfully obeys his mother, assisted by his uncle, and seconded by his eldest sister; the trio manage the common property, and he who participates in it renders them an account of his exploits and achievements. A Nair never

fancies himself such a big boy that he cannot be tied to "mamma's apron-strings." As long as the old branch holds he hangs upon it.

How distant seem these ways of living and feeling! What ages separate us from them! Yet it takes but a few days to pass from London or Paris to Calicut and Cannanore.

CHAPTER V.

THE MOUNTAINEERS OF THE NEILGHERRIES.—HERDSMEN, AGRICULTURISTS, AND WOODLANDERS.

NEAR the extremity of the Indian peninsula, at the junction of the Eastern and Western Ghâts, rises the mighty wall of Neilgherries or Blue Mountains. The English call them *hills*, though the end of the ridge, of which Dodabetta is the culminating point, towers from five to eight thousand feet above the plain. Thanks to its elevation, this mountainous district enjoys a healthy and delightful climate; the average temperature is somewhere about 15° Centigrade. After the rainy season the atmosphere seems deliciously pure and transparent; vegetation starts into fresh life, the grass shoots up, brilliantly tinted flowers glow amongst the ferns, creeping plants run riot over the trees.

The precipitous mountains stand up like walls, seamed with deep gullies. At their base are bamboo thickets and an impenetrable jungle, covert of the tiger, bear, and wild boar. The swamps are succeeded by the prairie, and beyond it lies the forest. Above, perpendicular rocks; below, the plateau, swelling into shady hill-sides, which are furrowed with narrow valleys, the beds of limpid streams. The traveller journeys through parks and woodlands, by paths bordered with mulberry and eglantine, over prairies scoured by buffaloes; suddenly he finds himself at the edge of the plateau. A vast plain stretches away into the distance. Alternating patches of forest and cultivated land tint it with green and yellow and violet. Here and there it is picked out with white by those human hives, the towns. The azure sea bounds it to the west; in the south rise the faint blue

Cardamums. The eye is satiated with soft brightness, as it broods over the wide expanse, pierces the aerial depths, dwells upon an innumerable variety of forms, colours, movements. At eventide the divine splendour that fills the heavens breaks into dazzling colours: gold, orange, crimson, scarlet, vermilion, slowly melting into clouds of purple and rose. And when the sun is swallowed in ocean, earth, weary of radiance, drunken with light, draws a veil of transparent shadow over her voluptuous limbs, envelops herself in silence. The atmosphere grows strangely limpid, the stars seem more brilliant than elsewhere;[1] the constellations rise like swarms of fire-flies, and the infinite universe stands revealed.

There are sanatoriums on several slopes of the Neilgherries, where invalids come to be cured of dysentery and fever. Eglantine, vines, oranges, peaches, plums, apples, pears, strawberries, currants, raspberries, radishes, cabbages, potatoes, all sorts of European plants,[2] prosper side by side with indigo and opium-poppies, tea and coffee shrubs, and the cinchona with its serviceable bark. Sooner or later these gardens and orchards will change the economic and social system of the country, will even modify its physical aspect, but will they beautify it? Be that as it may, the region cannot fail to witness a growth of its importance, thanks to the healthiness of the climate, the fertility of the soil, the variety of produce. Already there is an increase in the number of roads leading to the Gap of Coimbatore, which opens upon the interior of the peninsula.

The mountaineers have been described as follows:—A puny race; tall figures reach five feet two, medium four feet eleven; those under four feet eight inches are not uncommon. Colour, dark. Hair long and shaggy amongst the women; amongst the men, woolly. Beards greyish,

[1] R. Burton, *Pilgrimage to Mecca.*

[2] Malte-Brun, *Annales*, 1820.

and harsh as bristles. Mouth small, lips coarse; chest flat, deficient in girth, spine somewhat concave. Arms long, legs short, knees turning outward. Imperfectly developed nails. "The autochthonous race of Southern India," declares Huxley, "strikingly resembles the aborigines of Australia." There is the same profile, the same bulging forehead, the same soft glossy hair. Strip off their rags, leave them quite naked, and you would not be able to distinguish them.

This somewhat unflattering portrait is incontestably applicable to the wretched Irulas and Curumbas, in a minor degree to the Cotas, not at all to the Badagas, the mass of the population, still less to the Todas. Here, as in many other places, manner of life and social conditions override considerations of race and origin. The description, correct enough as regards the woodlanders, becomes inaccurate in the case of the artisans, false in that of the agriculturists and herdsmen.

The Todas,[1] to the number of a thousand, dwell in scattered hamlets on the upper slopes of the Neilgherries. They consider themselves the first inhabitants of the soil.

It is a pleasure to see them. Their colouring is clear chocolate, like that of the mountaineers of Beloochistan. Their figures are tall and well proportioned, generally over five feet eight in height. Their limbs are sturdy and muscular, but the extremities have none of the Hindoo delicacy and grace. Their features are regular. Their brown eyes are wonderfully quick and bright, full of intelligence, often melancholy and gentle, recalling the expression of a dog. In individual cases the eyes flash like diamonds upon the slightest excitement. The physiognomy is Jewish. Of course it has not failed to be discovered that these faces, so unlike their neighbours, belong to descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. The nose is aquiline, the lips thick; the beard curls, and the luxuriant hair grows in a coronal.[2]

[1] *Tudas, Toders, Todaurs, Thautawers.* [2] Caldwell.

Their remarkably developed capillary system distinguishes them from the Hindoos[1] and Dravidians. Their longevity is much greater than that of Europeans, but it has been observed that they have lost fertility by eating too much opium.[2]

Their tone of voice is calm and grave; amongst the women solemnity is replaced by a graceful playfulness. They speak an archaic Dravidian tongue, with a sprinkling of Sanskrit. Being accustomed to call and answer one another from hill to hill, their voices are loud, their pronunciation hissing. "The wind speaks Kanarese."[3]

It is impossible not to be struck by the taste and simplicity of their costume. Draped in a sort of toga, with one arm and thigh uncovered, they have quite the "grand air." It is a great pity they do not bathe or wash themselves. The women tattoo their chin, breast, arms, legs, and feet, adorning them with squares and circles, rings and lines.

Character and physical constitution correspond. Their hearty good-humour and jovial frankness, the freedom and originality of their manners, are no less pleasing than their forbearance, affability, politeness, and the charm of their conversation, which is always amiable and courteous, never boisterous and ribald.

"We could not help liking them," says Breeks. "They were extremely amused at our British idiosyncrasies, and laughed at them unrestrainedly, not considering themselves in any way our inferiors."

In fine, travellers have been very partial to the Toda, at least as long as he was himself, and uninvaded by foreign immigration. But the missionaries owe him a grudge for not showing much alacrity in allowing himself to be converted. They speak of this people as "fine animals, but indolent and slothful."

"They do not seek any one's society, but remain for

[1] Quatrefages. [2] Caldwell.

[3] Pope, *Outlines of Tuda Grammar.*

hours motionless, their gaze fixed upon the blue depths of the sky, ruminating like their own buffaloes. They have no intelligence save instinct."

If their intellectual level is not very high, at least silliness and folly are unknown. All being fashioned after the same pattern, each knows by intuition the thoughts and sentiments of the others. It is, or was, impossible to their innocent simplicity to find refuge from an awkward question in an evasion, still less in a lie; it was only necessary to interrogate them to make them say all they knew, whether they wished to do so or not.

"Herdsmen," as their Tamil name implies, herdsmen for untold ages, and herdsmen heart and soul, the Todas are incapable of seriously attending to anything but the care of their beasts; they will have disappeared before they become interested in agriculture or industry. They live almost entirely on milk, how should they think of anything but cows? They consume a very small quantity of farinaceous food, obtained from the Badagas as a sort of rent, yielded more or less graciously to the suzerains and first occupants of the soil. There is a tradition amongst them that their ancestors formerly sustained themselves upon roots, and to this day they show considerable relish for the bulbs of the *orchis mascula*. Grateful to the cow on which their lives depend, they dare not kill her; they love their bulls and heifers too much to slaughter them, and only eat their flesh at funeral banquets. Not that meat is in itself at all repugnant to them. If a foreigner gives them venison, they smack their lips over it; the feast creates an epoch, and long afterwards they take a pleasure in recalling its incidents.

It is curious that they have not taken to raising goats, swine, sheep, and poultry, as do their neighbours. But they herd cattle and nothing but cattle. And either from indolence, or some other motive, they wish to remain as they are.

The Toda, most pacific of mortals, uses no weapon, offensive or defensive; has not even recourse to a lance, a simple pointed stake. Yet his ancestors used the bow and arrows. He is never to be seen spreading nets, or setting traps and gins for fish or birds or the game which abounds in the neighbourhood, but he willingly appropriates prey run down by dogs. Violent exercises are repugnant to him. He practises neither fencing nor single-stick nor boxing, never even wrestles or runs races.

There is no judicial repression. The only known penalty attaches to a debtor. When he is too long in paying up, the creditor loads his neck with a heavy stone, that the weight of his obligation may be borne less easily. Disputes are submitted to the herdsman-priest, and there is no appeal. These innocents defend themselves against the invasion of hostile tribes, and the attacks of vagrants and plunderers, by making the doors of their houses so low that they must be entered on all fours. The children, more considerate than ours, never fight or quarrel or pull one another's hair.

Raised high above the torrid plains of India, the Todas inhabit a sort of tropical Switzerland; secluded amongst their pastures, infatuated with their own traditions, taking pleasure in their own customs, they have so far held themselves aloof from all foreign influences. This mountain canton forms a kind of ethnical island, more effectually isolated than if it emerged from the vast plains of ocean.

The Badagas,[1] saluted by the Todas with the title of "fathers-in-law," a courtesy to which they respond by passing a hand over their head, are the real masters of the Neilgherries. Thirty years ago, they formed a population of from twenty to twenty-five thousand souls, distributed in three hundred villages.

Until latterly they applied themselves for subsistence

[1] *Badagan*, *Baddagar*, *Badacars*, or *Vadaccars*, from *Vadacu*, the north; also called *Marver*, the labourers.

to agriculture only; but now they are increasing their flocks and herds and prospering under the English Government, which taxes them very moderately.

The women carefully manipulate the skulls of their nurslings, pressing and rubbing them to make them round. The race is under-sized, blackish, in fact mediocre; very inferior to the Todas. The dirty, ugly women-folk imitate the Fortune of the poets in that they leave their hair long in front and crop it behind. The girls signalise their entrance upon a marriageable age by daubing their faces with thick mud. The men do not tattoo themselves; their wives' principal adornment consists in dots upon the forehead, strange marks sometimes representing a visage, doubtless that of a divinity. These marks are compulsory on the forehead, optional on the shoulders, breast, and other parts of the body, which are often to be seen decked with crosses (nothing to do with Christianity), with suns with eight rays, or with nine eye-like circles and dots arranged in squares, each representing some hundreds of punctures, and all stigmata connected with the caste system.

Castes do not necessarily imply a spirit envious of superior classes. Scarcely conscious of inferiority in the presence of any one whatever, these people are entirely absorbed in their own enormous advantages over less fortunate individuals. The Todas, subdivided into five castes, which do not intermarry, have a contempt for the Badagas, passed on by the Badagas to the Cotas, by the Cotas to the Curumbas, the Curumbas to the Irulas, and the Irulas to some brutes or other. And the Badagas themselves are divided into sub-castes. To reach the highest, seventeen steps have to be climbed.

A patrician Chittre, hard pressed by hunger, took it into his head to sit beside one of the populace, who was eating a meal. The scandal was terrible. The person thus oblivious of all decorum was proscribed by public opinion, forced to go and drown himself. This Chittre belonged to the third

caste. Judge of the arrogance boasted by the upper two! A Badaga Vere de Vere quarrelled with some of the vulgar herd. When he felt himself roughly shaken by one of these clodhoppers, seized by the collar adorned with his *lingam* of nobility, the gentleman was stupefied, and mute with horror, took a knife and plunged it into his breast. Since this tragic event his family are looked upon as fallen, and his descendants will never be able to marry except amongst Badagas of low extraction. Another example: a whole tribe was degraded because the chief's son, being in love with a low caste maiden, tasted some food she gave him.

Caste apart, the Badagas show themselves courteous to their equals, affectionate to brothers and friends, deferential to the aged, tender and loving to children. On the other hand they are accused of treachery to strangers, and reproached with avarice and hardness, the darling vices of agriculturists. The abuse of hemp and opium easily tends to make them idle, sterile, frivolous, light-headed, and incapable of continued attention, in fact enervates them, body and mind.

We cannot call them bad or good. If it be difficult to form a definite judgment as to an individual, how much more as to a collective organism! It is easy to praise or blame peoples, nations, and tribes whilst they are unknown, but after frequenting their society who will venture to do either?

I will be brief as to the Cotas,[1] who hold a middle place between ugly Badagas and still uglier Curumbas.

To the number of two thousand or more, they dwell around the agricultural Badagas, amongst whom they employ themselves as weavers, carpenters, blacksmiths, gold-workers, masons, and general workmen of one sort or another. They occupy themselves with some petty cultivation, and raise a few cattle, but until lately dared not increase them, a thing

[1] *Kutas, Kothurs,* cow-killers, *Kohatars.*

that would not have been permitted by the Todas and Badagas, their powerful neighbours.

Poor in cheese and butter, poor in the produce of the soil, they know hunger otherwise than by hearsay. Consequently their great March festival, at the beginning of their year, is celebrated by a tremendous feeding-bout, and better still by a love-feast, conceived in a communistic spirit. Each family brings provisions, contributes to a subscription for buying corn, vegetables and sugar on the plains. These victuals are displayed before the shed which takes the place of temple. The officiating priest beseeches the gods to feed the people until the new harvest, digs a hole, lines it with leaves, and places in it the prepared food, that it may be blessed and endowed with the virtues of increase by the earth. He then distributes it amongst the congregation, to each his share. Travellers and strangers are welcome. All eat and drink gaily, and afterwards dance round a huge fire until midnight. On the next and following days, until the new moon, they make merry and have a good time. Before returning to their accustomed avocations, the artisans turn the temple into a workshop, and each manufactures there some product of his industry. A fair start is everything.

Let us pass on to the Curumbas,[1] who, to the number of two thousand or thereabouts, dwell in the jungle, in the most unhealthy spots in the forest, in swamps parched and poisoned by the scorching heat. They have often been compared to the Veddahs.[2] They feed in so miserable and even disgusting a fashion that it is astonishing, not that they are puny and stunted, but that they reach man's estate, and even perpetuate their race. It is stated that they fall ill if they sojourn in a healthy country, and that no stranger can sleep in their encampments without being attacked by fever.

[1] Or *Couroumunbars*, a word explained as *pig-headed*, or *obstinate*.

[2] *Vyâdha*, hunter.

Little pieces of ground about their huts bring forth a niggardly crop of roots and poor vegetables. The earth would not fail to become fertile and healthy, if they did not prefer uncertain game to regular harvests. From time to time they burn a corner of the forest, and scratch the surface with a feeble hoe or pointed stick. In the soil thus disturbed they deposit some seeds they have begged or obtained as wages for their small works or services. They would not have known how to take seed from the previous harvest, still less how to buy it, for neither coin nor silver are within their sphere. When the grain is ripe a band of friends come to gather it, and the horde overrun, ransack, and ravage the field. After the season of abundance, families disperse to search for berries and roots, to hunt the spotted deer, the wild cat, and the snakes and insects, which they are clever in surprising and quick in munching. They gather wax and honey to exchange amongst their neighbours.

Most of these little settlements put themselves under the leadership of a chief, who acts as arbiter and appeaser of strife. He is saluted by dropping the head upon the breast, and makes in return a gesture as if to raise it by taking it between his hands.

Wood-cutters by choice, they are skilful in wielding hatchet and bill-hook, clear thickets, chop logs, and prefer this work to any other. When hunger presses, men and women separate; the latter go into the Toda and Badaga villages to beg damaged food, any sort of offal, even the water rice has been boiled in; in return they undertake various small services, such as grinding and winnowing corn. The husbands and sons plunge into the jungle, their favourite haunt, their refuge in adversity, their earliest and latest shelter. Foraging here and there, they play the part of jesters, tiger-conjurers, sorcerers, and fortune-tellers; much like our gipsies, who also supplement their marauding by the produce of their small industries, as they wander from village to village, from forest to forest. The

word Curumba, feared as well as scorned, has come to mean misdeed, mischief, and witchcraft.

> " Le pauvre Suisse qu'on rapine
> Voudrait bien quel'on decidât,
> Si Rapinat vient de rapine,
> Ou rapine de Rapinat."

Civilisation, so cruel to many primitive men, has not been unkind to the poor Curumbas. It transforms the hunter into a woodman, the woodman into a carpenter; the beggar becomes a knife-grinder, then a servant. They go and take engagements upon the plains, where an easier life and gentler manners form and refine them. Employers seem to find their services satisfactory. If it were not that a type of physiognomy does not change in one generation, that the limbs for a time remain somewhat frail (the skeleton being modified less quickly than the flesh), they would be scarcely the same creatures. The pot-belly, the saliva dripping from the lips, the sunken eyes, the gaping mouth, all disappear. Some dress themselves, and replace the red berries, bracelets of roughly-forged iron and brass, or plaited straw anklets, by more costly ornaments. It is astonishing to see how more regular work, with more plentiful and wholesome food, transforms the exterior of these men, even their physiology.

At the foot of the Neilgherries, almost lost in the tall grasses of the swamp, crawl the Irulas—blacker, more puny,[1] more unhealthy than the Curumbas, with whom they might easily be confounded, were it not that these unfortunate people do not attempt any cultivation, however wretched. They manufacture osier mats, bamboo panniers, rush baskets, which they sell on the plain, exchanging them for some scanty grain, salt, or long pepper. They pluck berries and fruits, eat roots, catch insects and reptiles, find

[1] *Irula*, blackness, darkness, coarseness, barbarism. — *Tamil Dictionary*.

eggs and little birds; they have not even bows and arrows. For two or three months bamboo shoots are their great resource; rat, cat, or fox—nothing edible comes amiss to them, not even carrion. The jungle imposes its own character upon all who live *in* it, upon all who live *by* it; and these people are held the vilest of the vile, the wretchedest of the wretched.

In imitation of the Curumbas, they come out as jesters, mountebanks, and actors, and are paid in palm juice, which they drink to excess. In their representations they perform certain obscene episodes, especially the adventures of Krishna Govinda dwelling amongst the shepherdesses. But little more is needed for them to be enrolled amongst the Vishnuvites, in opposition to the Badagas, who profess Sivaism.

For all costume the Irulas twist a rag about their loins; in default of any stuff, the women have or had recourse to certain leaves; but this does not prevent them from desiring ornaments. They plait their hair with straw into a fantastic head-dress, and with straw again they fasten to their ears, neck, wrists, and ankles dry gourds, containing nuts and tiny pebbles, to jingle to the rhythm of their movements.

Naked as Truth, or nearly so, they appear incapable of lying or disguising their feelings; the bare statement of these poor creatures is more firmly believed than all the affirmations of a Hindoo, than all the oaths of a Brahmin. Will the theorists of progress explain the how and why of this anomaly?

Contrary to what happens elsewhere, widows, much sought after by the young men, marry again more easily than widowers. Parents show affection to their offspring, who warmly return it. Children take the name of a grandparent; often they await his death to take his name.

Much attached to their manner of life, to their race, and to the soil that witnessed their birth (where next will

patriotism ensconce itself?), the Irulas are desirous to sleep their last sleep amongst their own family. He who dies amongst strangers begs to be laid in a grave apart, hoping that a friend will piously collect his bones, and reunite them to the rest, in the tribal ossuary amid his native forests.

Thus the slopes of the Blue Mountains are inhabited by various populations, one above the other; each characterised by its dwellings, its occupations, and its food. Above, the Todas, exclusively herdsmen and milk-feeders; then the Badagas, agriculturists who have also a few herds and do not despise the chase; next come the Cotas, small workmen and artisans; and finally the forest dwellers, Curumbas and Irulas, essentially hunters, but vagabonds as well, thieves and artists, beggars and sorcerers.

The Irula lodges in the jungle, in a sort of lair; sheltering himself in a cave or under an overhanging rock; making a shake-down of straw or a shanty.

The Curumbas are housed a trifle better. What they call a village, we should scarcely dignify as a shed. A cabin, thirty or forty feet long and about five feet high, partitioned with bamboos interwoven with brush-wood. For door, a hole closed at night by a hurdle or any bundle of sticks. Under the common roof each family possesses a square where they crouch, there is not space to lie down. For kitchen utensils, half-a-dozen dishes and gourds. Boiled rice is a recent luxury; in former times it was grilled on a red-hot stone.

A Toda habitation is much more civilised, and may pass as luxurious in comparison. Each family has its own, always under the shadow of venerable trees. Practically the dwelling consists of a peaked straw roof, with an aperture for the escape of the smoke. The covered space, from fifty to sixty feet square, and seven feet high

in the centre, is intended to suffice for five or six persons, who go out and come in by a sort of rat-hole close to the ground. This habitation is called *mand* or park, after the enclosure beside it, where the animals wade up to their knees in accumulations of cow-dung.

A Badaga village—a long building of wood and clay, covered with reeds and twigs, with a pent-house overhanging the whole front, some fifty-four yards in length—is relatively spacious and comfortable. It never faces the north-east.

The missionary Metz, who preached the gospel among the Badagas for forty years, with more zeal than success, explains their name as "People of the North;" he supposes that their immigration dates three centuries back, and that they came originally from the mountains of Mysore. It has been inferred from this that their origin is Scythian, and the hypothesis has almost acquired the authority of fact. It does not greatly concern us — but is the north of the legend that of the geographers? "In the north," say the Badagas, "rises Kaylasa, our Meru, the residence of Siva; in the north infinity opens upon the Kingdom of Shades. If four men be despatched to the four points of the compass, three will return, but never he who has walked beneath the rays of the Polar Star." Amongst Christian nations the east suggests a vague idea of Paradise and the Garden of Eden. For the Badagas all that is great and powerful comes from the north; the mother of the Cow-goddesses dwelt on the Amnor before going amongst the Todas. Did not the ancestral Badagas follow the cow? Did they not come out of Paradise? Between the invisible mountains of Kaylasa and Kanagiri flows the dread river that divides the world of the living from the world of the dead. The Badagas do not care to look in that direction.

Each family has three tiny rooms at its disposal, the first of which, opening upon the street, is easy of access to

friends and neighbours. From it opens a small retreat, containing a bathing place, never out of use, for every Badaga has the laudable habit of indulging in a bath before his mid-day meal. A side-room contains the fireplace and stores of provisions. It is inaccessible save to members of the household. Even the wife would not think of entering it for some time before or after her confinement; it would be feared that her feeble condition, her supposed uncleanness, might lessen the virtues of the fire, or diminish the nutritious properties of the food.

For the same and analogous reasons, approach to the common dairy farm is forbidden to strangers, who might contaminate it with their breath; also to the village women, who might bring thither enfeebling influences. Milk is the object of extraordinary precautions, borrowed from the Todas: the Badagas do not venture to boil it nor to put it on the fire, for fear of causing the cow inflammation; which, be it parenthetically remarked, explains the origin of the famous Mosaic precept, "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk."[1] New-born calves are kept in a special stable, that they may be better protected from the malice of the evil eye. Only a priest has the right to taste the milk of a primiparous cow. The Badagas, Sivaists, as we have said, adore their god under the form of the bull Bassava.[2] The attachment they bear to their herds, without being equal to that of the wonderful Todas, constitutes a real religion, a devoted and even fanatic worship. A few years ago the neighbouring Cotas also wished to possess some horned cattle of their own, and to keep them in enclosed pastures, but were forced to give up their plan by the threats of the Todas and Badagas. These pious tribes could not bear the idea that an unclean race should arrogate rights of property over such pure-blooded animals as bulls and heifers; they could not permit men of vile extraction and ignoble life to usurp the holy office of milkman. It

[1] Exodus xxiii. 19. [2] Or *Barsappa.*

is a very painful thing to see a neighbour growing rich! Curumba cronies are of the same opinion, if it be true that they have killed comrades guilty of digging hiding-places for provisions, hamster fashion. But doubtless these food-hiders, who would not share their abundance, had lived upon the association in times of scarcity. Taking without attempting to make a return, they behaved like robbers, and their execution was as legitimate as that awarded by the Apostles at Jerusalem to the spurious self-devotion of Ananias and Sapphira.[1] He who in communal life amasses a hoard on the sly is both traitor and knave.

The Curumba who takes a wife, provides himself with a new piece of stuff to offer as a present. In company with friends of both sexes, the bride and bridegroom eat more copiously than usual, dance and amuse themselves, bathe together, and the ceremony is over.

As for the Irulas, they marry in front of an ant-hill, doubtless to gain fertility, and an innumerable posterity, by means of its influence. After having lighted a piece of camphor, the bridegroom passes a string round the bride's neck and leads her away. A sumptuous wedding dinner rarely costs more than half-a-crown.

Neither do the Badagas display exaggerated luxury in the matter of nuptial ceremonies. At the bride's home they dance and make merry; some one throws a pot full of water over her head for good luck, her mother-in-law puts on her a necklace of silvered beads. On a day accounted propitious, she is escorted to her new house, and enters it between flowering branches; the parents deliver her over to the person concerned, wash their hands and go, thus abdicating all responsibility.

If the bridegroom is too proud to go and fetch his promised bride, they take the trouble to bring her to him. She prostrates herself before the new lord and master, who phlegmatically sets his foot upon her neck, saying, "Long

[1] Acts of the Apostles, v.

life I wish thee! Bring me water!" She obeys, returns with a full pitcher, and the affair is at an end. She will not, however, have a right to the official title of wife until she is well through her first pregnancy. If she carry her offspring for seven months without accident, the two families proceed to the positive marriage. They meet at a feast, after which the father takes the young woman by the arm, raises her, calls the general attention to her enlarged figure. The young man comes forward: "Dost thou permit me to pass this cord round thy daughter's neck?" "Yes," replies the father-in-law. The cord put on, the legal marriage is complete; the child will be recognised as legitimate. A dish is brought; friends and relatives place on it small silver coins. Some young men, hard to please, make three or four trials before fitting the slipper. After marriages on trial, come temporary marriages; and, as if all this were not enough, it is extremely easy to get a divorce.[1]

Such are the ordinary forms of marriage, but that by rape is held in the highest estimation, and is the ambition of romantic maidens. And indeed the earliest espousals took place in this fashion; axe in hand, our first grandfathers obtained the hand of our first grandmothers. For a long time, in the matter of women, the axiom, "Property is theft," was indisputable.

A young Badaga who cannot obtain the girl of his choice makes known that he will have her or kill himself. Understanding which, some friends place him at their head, go, if need be, to seek reinforcements amongst the Todas, and return with a band of sturdy fellows. Generally the abduction is successful; if the fair one should, by any chance, not find the adventure to her taste, she will shortly bethink herself of taking poison.

If a woman miscarries, the married pair will address themselves to we know not what god, offering him cocoa-nuts, promising him a little silver parasol; the wife will

[1] Metz.

present votive offerings to Siva, promise to raise an upright stone to him, like those so frequently met with in that country. In this connection, we may remark that the ploughshare often lays bare flint hatchets, which the Badagas take for a natural product of the soil, "a sport of Nature."

A barren woman, whose desires heaven persists in baulking, persuades her husband to adopt a child, which is accomplished by a curious ceremony: the father passes his leg over the head of the child brought to him. Generally the barren wife goes and fetches her younger sister, and causes her to be accepted as wife number two; otherwise she will carry her shame and grief to the paternal home, happy if some widower with a family to bring up, or some old man without a housekeeper, come to take her thence.

For any sort of cause the husband enjoys the prerogative of sending away even a fruitful partner who has ceased to please him, and is free to marry again as often as he likes. He rarely uses this right, and if the first alliance has resulted in offspring, he will consider himself satisfied. On the whole, household bonds do not seriously hamper the movements of either man or woman. If the bride dislikes her home she can leave it, provided she deserts her children. The husband will restore whatever little things she may have brought; she quietly returns to her father and awaits the proposals of fresh admirers.

A misunderstood wife threatens, now and again, to take her own life; a threat not treated lightly, for Badagas often commit suicide, an unusual thing amongst primitive folk. It costs these dames and damsels but little to gather poppies and suck them that they may sleep the last sleep. Girls take this medicine if a displeasing husband is forced upon them; wives, if they desire to inspire regret.

From time to time widows gain a fine reputation by strangling themselves on the tomb of the departed. This is to die gloriously, to gain the honour of being invoked as tutelary divinities by wives. Chinese women have similar ideas.

The Todas also are a prudent people, and do not marry except on sure grounds. First of all, the young man must square matters with his father-in-law, and women are dear in those parts. If they come to terms, the intended bride and bridegroom are put under lock and key. The mother-in-law passes in provisions. After twenty-four hours she unlocks the door, and if the suitor has not known how to make himself agreeable he is dismissed to the jibes of his companions.

If both parties suit each other the father-in-law places his foot upon the youth's head[1] in sign of adoption, as if he declared: "Thou art my son; thou hast found thyself at my feet, like the little one fallen at the heels of the mother who has brought him forth." This homage is exacted once only from the young man, but the woman must pay it many times, to her father and mother-in-law, to the old men of the family, to her husband's brothers. All place their right and their left foot on her neck; afterwards the oldest man in the household will raise her, touching her forehead with his right hand, another sign of adoption.

By this symbolic act, the stranger, accepted as daughter by those having authority in the house, acknowledges herself their servant, their humble servant, their "maid of all work" indeed. Polyandry, in fact, reigns amongst the Todas, as in Thibet and Lesser Thibet, as amongst the Courgs, Nairs, and Tayeurs of Malabar, as amongst the Cingalese and so many others. Toda polyandry has retained distinct traces of the ancient adelphogamy, in which a whole group of brothers espoused a whole group of sisters. The eldest son made his choice, took the girl who suited him. As the younger brothers attained their majority, they acquired conjugal rights, became jointly responsible for the complete payment of the sum agreed upon with the father-in-law. The housewife, literally divided into shares, lived for a month with each of the shareholders in turn.

[1] A ceremony called the *Ada Buddiken.*

They distributed the children as follows:—The head of the community took the eldest, the second brother the second bantling, and so on. A significant detail: all the uncles are treated as "little fathers." Dams, offspring, and cattle, all are common in the *mand;* the woman is possessed and possesses nothing.

Having thus appropriated the wife and her increase, the aforesaid joint stockholders have not, after all, acquired the exclusive enjoyment of her person. In compensation for her multiple servitude, she has the right to take a *cavaliere servante* on her own account; generally some young man who has not been able to get married because of the scarcity of partners. Moreover, the greatest harmony prevails in these strangely constituted families.[1] It is even stated that it is allowable for a Toda woman to take a *cicisbeo* for each husband imposed upon her. The lovers always treat each other courteously. This is a matter requiring plentiful confirmation; concerning a paradoxical practice one should be prodigal of details. Unfortunately British modesty bars the way; the authors[2] who give us this valuable information do it regretfully, dryly, briefly, protesting all the while that it is impossible to expatiate on such immoralities; others confine themselves to saying that the vilenesses of which these creatures are guilty cannot even be mentioned; vileness which is probably nothing more than union between brothers and sisters, or at least between half-brothers and sisters.[3]

Not that the Toda women do not consider their conduct as modest and becoming as any in the world; only they have drawn up the code of propriety, *La Civilité puerile et honnète*,[4] in their own fashion. They are so reserved, not to say prudish, as not to allow any other persons than their husbands and their gallants to approach them; they even shriek if a kinsman brushes against their dress. This

[1] King. [2] Hough, Harness. [3] Marshall.
[4] An old French child's book on "Manners."

should be written in the past tense; for it is said that since foreigners have resorted to this beautiful and healthy land, the Todas, who were generous and disinterested when they were unacquainted with money, now water their milk, which has ceased to be delicious, and beg for pennies, cigars, and brandy, whilst the women and girls, given over to the vilest prostitution, are consumed by syphilitic maladies. As usual, the appearance of civilised man has been enough to debase and corrupt populations who received him with friendship and good-will.

We were saying, then, that in bygone days, when the eldest brother bought a girl, he acquired for the community of which he was chief the right to take on easy terms all the younger sisters as they reached a marriageable age. The second, however, was more especially attached to the second brother, and so forth. In the system of "matrimonial fraternity," as Lubbock terms it, or, to employ the language of Linnæus, in this polyandro-polygynic adelphogamy, each wife had several husbands, all brothers, and each husband several wives, all sisters. But as time went on restrictions were introduced. Finding themselves sufficiently provided for with one collective wife, the husbands allowed their sisters-in-law to marry out of the family. Times were hard; economy was an object; three men made shift with two girls, or five with three.

Put at too high a quotation by the authors of their being, the girls did not command a quick sale; then, as amongst the Khonds, the Rajpouts, and many others, the abominable practice of feminine infanticide was introduced. Naturally the mother or her friends were charged with the odious task. A Toda woman was asked about this, and replied—

"We never kill boys. As for girls, that is different; but still we only kill the sturdy and strong, it would be a sin to lay hands on the weakly and deformed."

Of the rickety or puny there were, however, but few. The

eldest was kept, but most of the others were got rid of; an old woman suffocated them in milk, or with a cloth, or laid them at the great stable-door, that in the tumultuous exit of the animals they might be trodden under foot. The little corpse was buried, never burnt. Certainly there are Malthusians other than the flock of the Reverend Mr. Malthus, apostle of the Gospel according to Manchester.

The English Government sternly prohibits infanticide. Marshall, after minute investigation, declares that this crime has disappeared, and states a singular fact:—The feminine birth-rate, so far from counterbalancing, or thereabouts, the masculine birth-rate, only attains the proportion of 70 in the 100; an anomaly which he explains by the predominance, through long generations, of families who chanced to produce fewer girls than boys. The tendency must have become permanent, and we have in the Todas a male-producing variety. Moreover, the same fact is said to present itself in all countries where there is female infanticide. It is believed that there is sufficient reason to assert that in polyandrous countries there is an excess in the masculine birth-rate; an excess in the feminine birth-rate in lands where polygamy reigns supreme. Nature would appear to accommodate herself to our caprices. We merely allude to these problems; demography does not possess sufficient evidence to solve them. However it may be, the tribe continually diminishes, and numerous reasons are assigned for its decrease. A period is set to the existence of animal and vegetable species; the Toda family has run its course.

The adelphogamic system is also passing away; at present there is not a Toda with the slightest pretension to easy circumstances who does not desire to have his wife to himself; polyandrous marriage is but for the indigent. The Leviratic law, however, the last corollary of this custom—that Leviratic law which the story of Boaz and Ruth has rendered familiar to Jews and Christians—remains in force on the Neilgherries, where a widow has always the

right to make her brother-in-law marry her. One way or another, those who are not too much faded manage to marry again, and the widow of thirty who refused to contract a second union would be pointed at: "She is mad!" they would say. It should be stated that a Toda man never maltreats a Toda woman. A loutish or brutal husband is unknown in polyandrous countries. I do not make this remark as an apology for the institution.

Marriage between relatives has had no dire consequences in this tribe, which, though it has practised the closest endogamy for centuries, possesses an athletic constitution and pleasing exterior, and is famed for the gentleness of its manners, the peacefulness and tranquillity of its manner of life.

On the father's death, the cattle are divided between the sons in equal portions. The house goes to the youngest, who will lodge and maintain the women of the family for life. It is the law of "juvignerie," found in so many countries, amongst the Mrus, the Kolhs and Cotas, amongst the Tartars, and, without going so far afield, in some cantons of Périgord. The "Borough-English" of Great Britain, or the "Custom of Ferrette," as it is called in France, is founded on the natural preference of mothers and grandparents for the youngest, specially confided to their care and tenderness; the "nestling," the "fledgling" is always the mother's darling; but generally the eldest enjoys the father's preference. The Law of Manu enjoins the procreation of the first child as a strict duty, a religious ordinance, leaving the generation of all the others to mere inclination, designating them, with scornful accent, as "children of love." Thus the first and last comers enjoy an advantage over the intermediate ones, who have to make their own living; the eldest takes the land, the youngest the house. The house went to the little one, for the little one meant the mother. Indeed it constantly happened that upon the death of the bread-winner, the last born, a feeble

nursling, would have died if it had been sent away; the house then was left to the widow that she might bring up the child, who, on reaching man's estate, was bound to keep his mother there and make her life happy. In a word, the law of "juvignerie" is a relic of the ancient matriarchate.

In the seventh month of her pregnancy a Toda woman and her husband retire to the depths of the forest; they choose a certain tree, beneath which they light a lamp; light and life are everywhere synonymous. The woman, kneeling, receives with profound respect a tiny bow and arrows. She lays them at the foot of the tree, then shares the evening meal with her husband. Together, with no shelter but the leafy branches, they spend the night in the forest, thus placing the child beneath the protection of the trees and their genii.[1]

Immediately the deliverance has taken place—it always happens in the open air—three leaves of the aforementioned tree are presented to the father, who, making cups of them, pours a few drops of water into the first, wherewith he moistens his lips; the remainder he decants into the two other leaves; the mother drinks her share, and causes the baby to swallow his. Thus father, mother, and child, earliest of Trinities, celebrate their first communion, and drink the living water, more sacred than wine, from the leaves of the Tree of Life.

Next morning, the mother transports herself and her nursling to a hut amid the woods, probably beneath the boughs of the mystic tree. They remain there until the new moon, be it a day or four weeks. But as soon as the mother is reinstated in the house, the father in his turn leaves it, and he too goes to wander for the duration of a moon in the forest. A custom which brings us near the *couvade.*

Why should the child be made an archer before his birth, and thus begin life as a forester? Is it a vestige

[1] Marshall.

of a long-forgotten epoch, when the Toda was a huntsman in the woods? Is it a relic of the ancient and universal legend that men are the issue of oak, elm, or sycamore, a recollection of the tradition which calls them Yggdrasil, the ilex, Askr, the ash, Vidhr, the willow, Reynir, the rowan, which supposes them to have sprouted from a kernel or a pip, from an acorn or a beech-nut? Do his parents wish to put the little Toda in sympathetic relation with trees, those wonderful colossi of vegetation? Do they desire that these shall communicate to the youngling, the "*sal*" its beauty and elegance, the "*teh*" its power and longevity, the "*maoûa*" its lofty grace and delicious perfume?

Another important function is naming the child. The father wraps the baby in his cloak and carries it to the great cowshed. Without entering, keeping at a respectful distance, he salutes the sanctuary with a solemn gesture, draws the little one from the hiding-place where it has been sheltered from the evil eye and from taking cold, raises it in front of the shed in which the tribal gods are penned, then slowly bends with it until its forehead touches the earth. Whilst it rests upon the ground, he pronounces the name and begins to pray, "May a blessing descend upon our children! May the calves, the cows, the whole people prosper!" Masculine names are all borrowed from sacred things, such as stables and springs. As for girls, the mother confers on them, without ado, any appellation she likes.

Nurslings are not weaned until thirty-six months have passed over their heads; frequently they are suckled until their sixth year.

Let us now descend to our friends the agriculturists. A Badaga baby is esteemed little better than a puppy until the mother has swallowed some pinches of ashes and a burnt piece of *acorus calamus*, which ingredients communicate we know not what properties to the milk. The infant gulps down some asafœtida, and a scruple of a

certain magma reputed sacred, and found now and again in the entrails of a bull. This secretion is somewhat like those bezoar stones, to which our Middle Ages attributed marvellous virtues.

There are auspicious and inauspicious days; children born at the full or new moon are considered to come in an evil hour. A cow that calves on a Friday is got rid of, with her calf.

Some time between the twentieth and thirtieth day the family recognise the child. The mother's brothers (the *mother's*, remark) meet together; the eldest takes it in his arms, pierces its ears, pronounces its name aloud.

There is a great festival on the day when a boy's head is shaven for the first time.

After the purely animal need of food and drink, none is more deeply felt than that of emotion. As for intellectual needs, they are the last to arise. It is easier to give birth to pain than pleasure; on the keyboard of the sensations, the notes of suffering are more accessible, numerous, and varied than any others. All primitive folks know this well, even in their infancy. Primitive man eagerly seizes every opportunity to gloat over the sufferings of others and, if he cannot do otherwise, over his own. In consequence, justice has so far been little but a system of punishments. Religion has been a pretext for macerations and tortures, and, regretting that life upon earth has not enough suffering, man cherishes a belief in eternal torments. Even natal and nuptial festivals have not been exempt from cruelty, and obsequies have over and over again been an occasion of bloodshed and the infliction of pain. Those we are about to describe amongst Todas and Badagas count as some of the most innocent, but are well calculated to excite emotion. Provided one is moved, it matters little, it seems, whether the sensation be agreeable or disagreeable. Amongst primitive men the distinction between pleasure and pain, sorrow and joy, is less marked than amongst civilised folk. At

funerals, our mountaineers sing, dance, consume all the provisions they can get, pass from laughter to tears, and from sobs to a wild mirth. Are they rejoicing? Are they sorrowing? Who can tell? Thus Todas meet at a friend's house, embrace him, half a dozen at a time, until he disappears in the midst of a pyramid formed by their heads pressed against his. They sing, whimper, moan, and shriek. One group howls and laments, Hi hi! hi hi! Another group answers by still hollower intonations, Thi! hi hi! You would suppose that the man they were visiting was ill, that he was dying, or about to go away for a long time. Not at all; he has returned from a journey, and they rejoice to see him safe and sound.

A Badaga woman has just departed this life. Let us follow her funeral; the festival will not last more than three days.

At the entrance of the village rises a eucalyptus, a sacred tree, before which a sort of altar has been set up, flanked by an upright stone, five feet high; the whole enclosed by a *gilgal* or circle of boulders. The corpse, laid upon a canopied bed and decked with leaves, is placed beneath the shade of the great tree, and provisions for a journey are brought; rice by the basketful, milk in earthen pots. Handfuls of grain are thrown on the fire and distributed amongst the spectators, the poor and strangers carrying away as much as they will.

It is the morning of the first day. See, here is a procession appearing. At its head march the Cota musicians. Relatives and friends file past, touching one corner of the bier with their feet. Themselves covered with dust, they sprinkle dust over the departed, and prostrate themselves groaning. The women hang over their old companion, call upon her with tears, squeeze their milk into her mouth. All the cows in the family follow, that the dead may feast on the sight of them for the last time, bid farewell to what the world contains of loveliest and best.

The rear of the procession is brought up by boys, clasping newly sharpened bill-hooks to their foreheads with folded hands. Each stops, drops a little earth upon the face of the departed, bows low and retires. By these open knives upon the brow, they offer themselves as sacrifices; doubtless this sinister symbol recalls an atrocious reality of earlier times.

These genuflexions and lamentations serve as prelude to the "Howling" or "Hooting." Assuming a fearful aspect, flinging their arms forward, violently clenching their fists, throwing themselves upon the earth and suddenly springing up again, strong men simulate a contest with the demons who are supposed to be dragging away the soul of the deceased. The ravishers are repulsed, there is a truce to the sobs and groans of the bereaved, and they flourish their arms and kick about their legs as if they had received an electric shock. The dance, at first slow and uncertain, grows faster and faster, more and more accentuated, degenerates into an indecent romp, a mad *cancan*. Many a woman, looking on quietly until now, maddens, flings herself into the whirlpool. Carried away by delirium, her *vis-à-vis* strips off his garments, changes them for those of a woman, and begins to make obscene gesticulations. All this, it is explained, is to assist the departed, to communicate strength to her, to make an abundant provision there for her. She has, she will have, great need of it on the long journey. First, she must hoist herself to the peak of Kaylasa; next, she must journey over swamps and precipices, effect the difficult passage of the River of the Dead. A slender thread is stretched across the stream; over this every soul must venture before it can reach its last abode. Beware of a slip or a stumble! None, not even the most righteous, the best, can be sure she will not founder and be lost in this frightful crossing.[1] She will encounter the Auk and two demons, Gaping Jaws and Raven Beak, one who swallows,

[1] Graul, *Die Westküste Ostindiens.*

one who tears. With these struggles and pushes, with these kickings and friskings, her friends are aiding the departed to lay hold of the sun, to climb after him, as best she may, the steep slope of the firmament.

This superstition appears to us absurd and fantastic; yet it is not unknown in Europe. Certain Walachians will have no funerals in the morning, on purpose to spare the soul the severe ascent to the zenith; they fear, doubtless, lest it should be exhausted in following the sun; if it take an easier road, it runs less risk of losing itself and falling a feeble prey to the vampires lying in wait for it.

However this may be, the glorious star, soul of the world, has by now reached the summit of his course, and pours his rays upon the great amphitheatre of the Neilgherries, the Badaga soul gliding upon the slopes of Mount Kaylasa will now not have far to go to the Palace of Souls. She will repose until she has been announced to Him whom it may concern, until the door-keeper has received permission to open. Down below the uproar ceases; the mourners wipe their foreheads, allow themselves to drop beside the road; the footsore leave and go home.

But this is only half the ceremony. The body has not yet been conveyed to its last resting place, and it is by no means certain that the soul cannot or does not desire to re-enter the body; the ill-intentioned strive to do so. At this moment the soul may be lingering, doubtful of its reception in the other world. In any case it has been provided with the toll demanded by the door-keeper. When the last agony seizes the dying, a tiny grain of gold is placed on the tongue; if they have not strength to swallow it, it is sewn into a cloth and fastened to the arm. The universal practice of Charon's groat is to be found even in the country districts of France.

Four men catch hold of the bier, raise it upon their shoulders, and set forth, preceded by musicians. Women, arranged on the right and left, drive flies from the corpse

with their fans. Men run in front of the procession, then, turning quickly, fling themselves at full length upon the ground. Why is not explained. It is always beside a streamlet that the body is reduced to ashes. The bed is laid upon the pyre, with various ornamental objects and domestic utensils to be carried away by the smoke. A man is furnished with a bow, a handful of arrows, and a staff for the journey; his precious gourd and faithful flute are not forgotten. Pestles and mortars for grain are included in this household removal, as well as several things for which it is allowable to substitute cheap imitations. The dead care not for material implements, for weighty and substantial utensils; in the kingdom of shades they need but semblances.

That the departed may be graciously received by the judges beyond the tomb, she must be made pure, clean, and spotless. To this end a ceremony takes place, in which the Christian missionaries have been able to see some resemblance to the Mosaic rites of the "sin-offering" and the "scape-goat." The sins of Israel were carried away by the heifer burnt upon the altar and the he-goat driven into the wilderness.[1] Certain mountain-dwellers in China devote a man to the pestilence. He causes it to enter into him by means of some incantations, and flees out of the canton. They also load with their crimes and misdemeanours a certain unfortunate, who submits to be immolated, on condition that the community provide for the needs of his family.[2] The Todas have an expiatory cow; they cut her throat, and drive her calf away into the mountains. The Gonds pass over their crimes and misdemeanours to certain denizens of the poultry-yard, and make them fly away into the jungle. In like manner, the Badagas load a calf with the faults of the defunct and his ancestors, and drive it with cudgels into the midst of the forest. Note that this

[1] Numbers xvi. and xix.

[2] Hellwald, *Naturgeschichte des Menschen.*

calf, called Bassava, by means of which they cause their sins to be trampled under foot, is an incarnation of Vandi, own son to the god Siva.[1] Thus the guilty takes the judge for surety; the criminal identifies himself with the avenger of wrong-doing, who must always know how to get out of the difficulty. Triumph of human cunning, this method of settling accounts with the conscience!

The officiating priests take up their position before the pyre, and holding the calf by its horns, recite a liturgy,[2] which we abridge:—

"Mada, our sister, leaves the world where men die, sets out on the journey, the great journey. Mada is dead. But here is Bassava. Upon the young bull, issue of Barrigé, the brindled cow, we lay the thousand and eight sins committed by Mada, and all the sins of her mother, and all the sins of her grandfather, and all the sins of her grandmother, of her great-grandfather, and of all her family.

"What has Mada done? She has sinned, she has sinned grievously. And here are the sins she has committed:—

"Mada has caused brothers to quarrel.

"Mada has poisoned the food of others.

"Mada has misled those who asked her the way.

"Mada has refused rice to the hungry.

"Mada has driven the chilled traveller from her hearth.

"Mada has thrown thorns upon the road.

"Mada has angrily torn the garment caught in the brambles.

"Mada has uprooted the solitary tree.

"Mada has made a hole in the wall of the tank that the water may escape.

"Mada has drunk from the stream without bowing or giving thanks.

"Mada has spit into the fountains.

"Mada has made water upon the fire.

[1] Bachofen, *Antiquarische Briefe.*

[2] Graul, *Die Westküste Ostindiens.*

"Mada has dunged before the face of the sun.[1]

"Mada has become the accuser of her brothers.

"Mada has shown her teeth at her sister.

"Mada has raised her foot against her mother.

"Mada has lain upon a carpet when her father-in-law had not whereon to seat himself.

"Mada has turned her kinsfolk out of doors that she might entertain strangers.

"Mada has committed fornication with her son-in-law.

"Mada has cast an envious eye upon the neighbours' harvests.

"Mada has coveted her neighbour's cow.

"Mada has removed a landmark.

"Mada has ploughed with too young a bull.

"Mada has killed a snake, has killed a lizard.

"Mada has killed a cow."

After each utterance the bystanders repeat, in hollow, gutteral tones, "*Which is a sin, which is a sin.*"

Certainly the unfortunate defunct has not committed the innumerable offences imputed to her, but they are all recited in the lump that none may be left out. Besides, such and such a crime, if not perpetrated, may have existed in intention. This litany recalls the "Confession of the Forty-two Sins," placed by the *Funereal Ritual* in the mouth of the departed who presented himself before the forty-two judges of the Egyptian Amenti. In it also the soul excused itself for having committed theft, adultery, or murder, having desecrated holy things, having caused its fellows to weep.

"May the thousand and eight sins of Mada fall upon Bassava! Upon Bassava all the sins of her kinsfolk! Upon Bassava all the sins of her ancestors!"

The chorus:—

"May all our iniquities fall at the feet of the Buffalo, and may he tread them under his hard shoe! Upon Bassava

[1] These latter passages might figure in the liturgy of the ancient Persians or that of the Essenes.

all the sins of Mada! May they disappear, may they disappear, and be no more seen!"

And all rush upon the calf, which they push, strike, and hustle away:—"Hence, away, away! far, far away!" and the animal, bewildered by the noise and blows, scampers madly off, and gallops into the forest. Now that the sins of Mada scour the wild, carried away by the Bassava who will be seen no more, the dead has become holy, and the crowd intone the litany of her virtues:—

"Mada has kissed the foot of her father, the knee of her mother."

The chorus (with conviction):—

"*Which is a meritorious act!*"

"Mada has prostrated herself before the moon.

"Mada has opened her hands before the sun.

"Mada has protected an ox that was being chased.

"Mada has given refuge to a pursued cow.

"Mada has given away rice by the bag-full.

"Mada has given away butter, butter plentiful as the rain."

"*A meritorious act! a meritorious act!*"

Then a woman rises, celebrates the lofty qualities of the deceased. She speaks extempore, the gossips interrupt her and complete the panegyric: "Always a good mother. Yes, yes! . . . What alms she distributed! . . . Yes, yes!" Emotion gains upon the assembled crowd, voices are broken by sobs; the old women wail, the children howl. The whole assembly fan the pallid visage, drive off the flies, offer the last delicacies to the departed—tobacco, betel, pepper, barley-sugar.

But it grows late, all must soon be over. The officiating priests proclaim silence, and, stretching out their arms towards the north, continue:—

"Open, great mouth of the sepulchre! Mada will pass over the river which separates the world of the living from the world of the dead!

"Pass over the bridge, O Mada, and may the thread not be broken!

"Before Mada, close, O Dragon, thy frightful jaws!

"May the rocks not bar from Mada the abode of the blessed!

"May her hands not be burnt by the blazing pillars!

"May she not be stopped by the wall of gold with the columns of silver.

"Before Mada, eternal gates, lift up, lift up your heads!"

A man approaches holding a flaming torch, which he applies to the pyre, with averted face.

The next day, the kinsfolk shave hair and beard, gather up the ashes, carry them to the stream and cover the unburnt bones with great stones. Afterwards the needy have permission to search the cinders of the pyre for fragments of jewellery.

On each anniversary friends sing and dance before the little heap of mortuary remains. From time to time they interrupt their saltations to roll upon the ashes and bury their faces in them. The ceremony, interspersed with copious repasts, lasts for three or four days and ends with an orgy, which according to the missionaries it is impossible to describe. It is probably intended to restore life and vigour to the wandering soul.

Let us now pass to the near neighbours of the Badagas.

The Toda who feels himself dying has no intention of leaving this world like a mean rascallion or person of no account; it would displease him to be constrained or forced to depart. To bid friends and neighbours farewell, he attires himself in his finest clothes and covers himself with necklaces and jewels, which will not be taken off until he has departed this life or is healed. The sick have been known to rise, and calling up their last remaining strength, to make themselves smart, and parade from door to door, adorned with all their metal trappings, wrapped in their handsome toga, indulging in the luxury of a new cloak, their hands in

their pockets, which are furnished with sugar, roasted corn, and other little delicacies—then, their visits ended, totteringly to return and fall down in the last agony. They prefer not to undertake the great journey except on an auspicious day—Sunday, Thursday, or Saturday. But death does not always consult their convenience, and takes the liberty of carrying them off too soon.

The corpse is exposed in a hut near the cattle pen. The dead man is covered with a mantle of ceremony, and set on his feet, some holding him up on the right, others on the left. The herds are brought, a clapperless bell is fastened to the animals' necks, and they are told, "Follow your master!"

The mourners dig a hole, and throw clods upon the deceased and his cattle, crying "Return to the earth!" The bulls and cows, calves and heifers file past; each beast walks between two men, who lead it by the horns. The stiffened arm is raised as each creature passes, and made to touch its forehead, with a gesture that explains the formula of Roman law, "The dead lays hold upon the living," and this other phrase of Canon law, "Possessions in mortmain."

Upon a pyre composed of seven sorts of wood are spread various objects, the personal property of the deceased, together with some eatables and a pitcher of water. The fire is kindled by the friction of sacred dried sticks. Whilst the flames spread, the corpse is swung three times, then laid down and turned round with the face sunwards; it is the classic attitude of victims devoted to the infernal gods.

"Rest in peace! Rest in peace! We will supply thee with bulls and heifers! May all thy sins be forgiven thee! Go without fear, go! thou shalt never lack milk to drink!"

At the last moment a curl is cut from the head, already enveloped in smoke. And the women also cut their own hair to half length, and begin to wail, scream, and moan in couples, forehead against forehead.

One or two cows are brought; the men and youths fall

upon them, seize their horns, push, hustle, strike, beat them without mercy, finally kill them with no other weapons than knotted cudgels.[1] The poor animals, hitherto treated with affectionate gentleness, resist as they can, and sometimes succeed in goring and trampling down several of the assailants, who struggle and shout, exciting themselves to strike by noise, tumult, and confusion. But when the unfortunate beasts have succumbed, all fling themselves upon the quivering bodies, caressing the neck, the torn sides, the bruised head; the butchers seem now to hold nothing in the world so dear as their victims.

During the scuffle the corpse has been burning. The fragments of skull, the calcined bones, together with the curl of hair, are deposited in a handkerchief to be suspended on a pillar of the house. Henceforth the phantom of one of the family Lares will float around these relics. The gold and silver jewellery is taken out of the ashes and carried away; the soul which has just deserted its perishable envelope is believed to have collected the immaterial portion. The valueless remains, the scorched and spoiled finery, twisted iron bracelets, notched knives, warped rings, are buried with the ashes, which are covered over with earth. A stone is thrown on the top and a pitcher broken over the mound. The Palal closes the solemnity by throwing a handful of grain over the fragments, then takes his way towards the cowshed, his sanctuary, the crowd opening a wide passage for him. After this, each bows, touches the stone with his forehead and departs. Directly the mourners are out of sight, the Cotas appear; they were impatiently waiting for the moment when the carcases might be cut up.

Henceforward when the conversation turns upon the deceased, care will be taken not to mention his name. If the hut constructed for the cremation was made for a woman, it is destroyed; if it was used for a man, it is preserved, but no one touches it.

[1] A custom also to be found amongst the Betsiles of Madagascar.

This first ceremony is called "The green funeral," because it disposes of the recently living flesh. "Dry funerals," those of the bones, are celebrated in honour of several corpses at a time. At the latter, objects of personal use are burnt; milk jars, staves, clothes, and also models of flutes, and bows and arrows—models, I say, for it is long since the Toda gave up using these instruments and weapons. The handkerchiefs in which the calcined remains were collected are brought and emptied into a cloak; a fold for each of the dead. This cloak will then be hung up at the door of the temple-cowshed. The dead thus take their place amongst the protecting deities of the clan.

Cows will be sacrificed to these manes, one at least for each individual. Formerly, forty have been known to be despatched at a time; but the British authorities have forbidden the immolation of more than two beasts per man. The muzzle of each slaughtered animal is put in contact with the mortuary cloak; the last breath of the expiring cow passes over her old master's remains.

The ossuaries, twelve feet high, thatched with straw in the shape of great extinguishers, have no resemblance to the ancient funereal monuments scattered over the country, the cromlechs and stone circles called by the Todas *p'hiús* (a word signifying an urn or pot), and by the other aborigines, *Pandou Kolis*, the tombs of the Pandous. Beneath these huge slabs ashes and charcoal are found, with fragments of broken glass and earthenware, lance and arrow heads, little bells, sometimes pieces of gold and baked clay, representing various animals, such as peacocks, oxen, tigers, and antelopes.[1]

The main anxiety of the dead has been to cause himself to be followed by cows to feed him with their milk. To make fun of the materiality of the soul who eats and drinks, the missionaries asked, What if the cows grow thin, and if maggots get at the cheese? These objections extremely

[1] Hough.

embarrassed the poor Todas, who, at a loss for further arguments, ended by saying, "All that is mere quibbling! It is long ago that our fathers taught what must be believed, and we hold to it. On the other side people live as here; that is sure, that is certain. It is not at all easy to be born, but when once one has begun to live, there is nothing for it but to go on."

The proselytisers insisted; but their interlocutors cut them short: "This makes our heads swim! Better to think of nothing and be at peace. Enough of this!"

Having no other care than their milk, no other pre-occupation than their herds, the Todas confer a blessed immortality on themselves: indolent herdsmen amid green pastures, they will lead magnificent red bulls and lovely white cows. Death, they say, is but a passage; the second life in no wise differs from the first. Am-nor, Beyond-the-Tomb, is a country resembling the Neilgherries in all things, save that it extends far into the distance;[1] that the grass is taller and the cattle fatter. Between the present century and eternity there is a common moment, death; between this earthly sphere and the regions beyond, there is a point of contact, the Makourti, Navel of the Earth, Pillar of the Firmament. It is a rock, mounting to the heavens, and commanding a vast plain. Upon its platform are assembled the troop of souls for whom the ceremony of the Dry Funeral has broken all bonds with this world. From the height of the precipice, the poor things cast a glance over the prairies where graze the happy herds, a last look at the village whence the smoke rises amongst the clumps of trees, a long look upon the dearly loved cottage before which calves, dogs, and children tumble, race, and skip in merry confusion. The sun sinks, drops into the golden splendours of the west. And after him the souls take the leap; from the peak they plunge into the abyss, turning over and over

[1] *Amnor*, *Huma-Norr*, *Om-Norr*, the Vast Land; *cf.* the Eurynome Hades with Eurydice for sovereign.

in the giddy depths, until some streak of vapour checks their fall. They rise once more into the wide spaces of the air, swim amongst the aerial waves, let themselves slide into a pathway of sunbeams, touch at the white and rosy clouds, floating isles of the azure ocean, join the glorious star, and disappear behind violet mists.

In Polynesia also, as Wyatt Gill relates, the souls of warriors fling themselves from an overhanging rock, join the brilliant procession of spirits, accompany the magnificent sun in his descent towards Hawaiki, abode of felicity, garden of the Hesperides.

And amid the nebulæ of the Milky Way, the brave Toda can perfectly distinguish the herds of oxen grazing in celestial meadows strewn with stars. Homer, and Hesiod too, knew of the plain carpeted with asphodel, where, from cycle to cycle, from age to age, the goat Amalthæa, the ram of the Golden Fleece, Io, fairest of heifers, and the bull of Jove, browsed upon the starry flowers of night, guarded by Argus, the thousand-eyed herdsman, who kept them for ever beneath his sad and eternal gaze.

Neilgherry herdsmen are at least as much absorbed in the cares of the cowshed and dairy as in those of the family. The animals, with whom they live in such exceedingly intimate relations, communicate to them something of their physiognomy and way of feeling. Men and beasts have the same heavy, gentle appearance, the same gravity, the same phlegmatic peacefulness broken by flashes of anger, the same patience crossed by passing fits of fury, the same quietude veined with ferocity. The deep, hollow chest voice of the Toda can on occasion imitate bellowing, snorting, and lowing. His dialect is gutteral enough to please the herdsmen of Schwytz, the drovers of Uri.

The little world which inhabits the heights of the Neilgherries has been born of the cow, and is suckled by her maternal udder. To groom, to milk, to churn, to make

curds and whey, can there be more noble occupations? Can the eyes enjoy a more agreeable spectacle than the contemplation of these grand and glorious beasts? If they may not be approached, they can be regarded from afar; they are encompassed with an admiring respect almost amounting to adoration. The herdsman guides and caresses them with a long, slender wand; "talks buffalo" to them, says Marshall, has found a bovine language:—

"Take the cow from them, and their whole society would go astray and fall to pieces. The devotional care with which they surround their herds is their worship, their religion. The Toda dreams cows. . . . Look! with vacant glance and absent air, he picks up a forked branch, bends, pares, rounds it into a pair of horns. In the evening, the children will come in from the pastures with an armful of these horns, at which they have been working all day."

Are you astonished that the Earth, mother of mankind,—Earth, with her teeming bosom,—has been adored under the form of the Cow? The religion of agricultural peoples is that of the Bull, pastoral peoples that of the Cow and the Ewe.

"Glorious Jupiter, greatest of Olympians, thou who takest pleasure in the droppings of sheep, who lovest to bury thyself in the dung of horses and mules," sang an Orpheus,[1] of the times when Homer was celebrating the swine-keeping divinities.[2]

This worship of bovinity has not disappeared from our midst,—even if we say nothing of the Golden Calf. Any of our good French peasants would fetch the veterinary surgeon for his cow before calling in a doctor for his wife. In a school in Appenzeld, an inspector on his rounds questioned an intelligent-looking boy:—

"My little friend, you know the religion professed in our canton, its doctrines and practices?"

[1] *Fragmenta Orphei*, ed. Hermann.

[2] Odyssey.

"Yes, Mr Inspector; it is the raising of cows and the production of cheese!"

Each Toda village owns its sacred herd, led, not by a bull, but by a "bell-cow." She owes this distinction neither to her beauty, nor the quality of her milk, but to her descent in the female line from an illustrious cow, an arrival from Paradise, an incarnation of Hiria Deva. Even when aged, lanky, ill, she is not deposed from the royal dignity, symbolised by the bell hung round her neck. If the mistress cow dies without posterity, she is succeeded by a heifer, issuing, like herself, from a divine cowshed. The consecration is performed by the priest, who, morning and evening, for three successive days, has swung the bell before fastening it to the heiress, and with a serious and affectionate tone has said:—

"How fair was thy mother! How much milk she gave! Be not less generous! Henceforth thou shalt be a divinity amongst us. Let not our sheds fail! Bear a thousand calves!"

Thus the archaic principle of maternal affiliation has been better preserved amongst the Todas in the divine family than in their own, where it has left but indistinct traces. Those amongst the young bulls who are most distinguished for vigour and beauty, are kept to renew the stock; they are never given to Cotas in payment for service rendered; it would be impious to sell such noble beings. So much care and attention has produced a fine race; Toda cattle are of heavier build than those in the plain, and give better milk; their hides are in great demand. Before the father of the herd is presented to his future companions, he is made to spend twenty-four hours in retirement and fasting, is purified and sanctified. Yet the respect shown to the prince consort is but a pale reflection of the majesty encompassing his spouses, more especially the queen mother, leader of the herd. We are here in the very midst of the matriarchate, precedence belongs to the females.

A little hamlet may do its best, yet, after all, its cow-house is a small one; but important villages treat themselves to "parks," which are their glory. The whole tribe owns a central cowshed, the national sanctuary and treasure-house, the point towards which converge its memories and its hopes. It is proud of its cowsheds and dairy farms, its peculiar cathedrals, its metropolitan churches; many contain relics, brought directly from the Amnor, sacred objects of which the sacrilegious curiosity of Europeans has succeeded in catching a glimpse; bells without clappers, churns, clasp-knives with wooden handles, adzes, and pruning hooks. The people, kept at a distance, have never beheld them, and regard them with profound veneration. Cows, gods, and bells are for them united in one most sacred Trinity, more mysterious than ours; they make of them one and the same hypostasis, which they do not distinguish nor desire to distinguish. The animal and the divinity, the copper, the priest, and the cowherd, all these are called DER. Symbol, sacrament, elements, sign and thing signified, the faithful jumble them all together under one and the same name, muddle them up in one act of adoration, fall prostrate and think no more about it. The Toda is too religious to dogmatise. And indeed dogma is a product of the intellect, and is of another nature from the religious sentiment. With pretentious clumsiness it thrusts logic into that which denies logic; it presumes to systematise mystic intuition, and to define the indefinable; it takes upon itself the right to limit the eternal, to draw up petty formulæ for the infinite. The belief of our herdsman is too artless, too sincere for him to analyse it. His simple honest faith has never been bounded by reservations and negations; it overflows and he has never warned it: "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther!" What to him the How and the Why?

In front of the hovel containing the sacred treasure is the meeting-place where disputes are settled and solemn decla-

rations made, declarations worth all the signatures and flourishes of deeds drawn up before registrars and notaries. Todas do not suppose it possible to break a promise given before the sanctuary whence they daily draw life and nourishment; before the grand dairy they dare not carry on an idle conversation. Were not differences judged before the doors of sacred buildings in the Middle Ages? To this very day the *Tribunal des Eaux* sits beneath the cathedral porch at Valence, and no one of its decrees has been infringed for centuries.

The officiating priests of these dairy churches are of several orders, but all "pastors" in the more literal sense. They have been all taken from the sacerdotal caste of Peikis, "sons of the gods," and are Nazarenes, forbidden to shave or to cut their hair. These ministers of the Most High are not indebted for their functions to any superior instructions, any secrets of magic or sorcery. Their religion, destitute of mysteries properly so-called, has no esoteric doctrine; its professors have constructed for it no body of tradition, no Golden Legend.

The rites are known to every one, but investiture, which assures inviolate respect for the consecrated, is needful before they can be practised. Priests, even in their absence, are only spoken of in a subdued tone, they are designated by their title and office, never by the name they bore before taking orders. Their own father does not speak to them without prostrating himself; no one would venture to touch their utensils, or their vestment, however lousy it might be. A child must not approach them, his breath would sully their purity. If, by chance, they come out of the sanctuary, he who encounters them takes flight at the top of his speed or humbly drops his eyes until they have passed by. That their lives may be wholly devoted to duty, as rigorous a celibacy is imposed on them as on the high priests in Hindoo pagodas; women keep at a respectful distance, at least a hundred paces. Round the grand dairy there is a wide circle of taboo.

Nevertheless, when the labours of the day are terminated some recreation is granted, the door half-opens to the world; otherwise these victims of duty would sink into imbecility. In the evening they divert their minds by listening, whilst the citizens, leaning or squatting in their proximity, discuss public affairs. But the august personages take good care not to intervene in these discussions. The *palal*, or "grand dairyman," the supreme pontiff, scrupulously keeps his distance, even from his acolytes; his second, the *kavilal*, herdsman or shepherd, does not venture to address him, and assists him with extreme reserve. The *kavilal* in turn receives the veneration of the *palkarpals* or milkmen, and the *vorchals*, sort of clerks, deacons, beadles, and churchwardens, who also live in strict celibacy, but keep up some relations with the outside world.

The Palal is held, not as a son of the gods, but as a god himself; yes, as God in person. Before his elevation to the divinity the poor devil very likely had not enough to eat. But no sooner has he donned the pallium, and drunk of the sacred liquor, than he rises higher than mere humanity. During his week of initiation, he meditates his future duties, crouching beside a rivulet in the forest. Three days and two nights he remains naked, without a rag upon his skin, having stripped off with his raiment all earthly affections and worldly cares. If he is frozen upon the heights, so much the worse. During the last night, however, he is permitted, and indeed directed, to light a fire by rubbing sticks together. Each evening the Kavilal, or Grand Vicar, brings him a porringer of milk from the sacred precincts. With a flint, the future Palal cuts some branches from a sacred shrub, the *tude*.[1] Whilst reciting *mantras* or incantations, he bruises the bark, squeezes out the sap, and smears it all over his body, mixes the juice with a little water, raises the beverage to his forehead and then swallows it. Morning, noon, and evening, he rubs

[1] *Meliosma simplicifolia*, alias *Millingtonia*.

himself with the damp bark and bathes in spring water. After being imbued for a whole week with this vegetable liquid, which may be a succedaneum for the marvellous *soma*, the Palal is finally transmuted, his flesh is pure, and the ambrosia of the *tude* causes the *ichor* or divine blood to flow in his veins. Circumstance to be noted: he has received his investiture from no one, not even his predecessor; this God is dependent on no one, he has consecrated himself.

For the management of the few cattle they are allowed to raise, the Çotas have gone to school to the Todas. Their grand dairyman owes the aureole which surrounds his person to the belt or diadem he has made for himself, by ravelling out the rags of a vestment worn by the august Palal. Moreover, he has bathed, he has rubbed himself seven times, with the sap of seven different shrubs, swallowing some drops of each; he has impregnated himself with their virtues within and without. But what have we to do with the disciple? Let us fix our attention upon the master.

The Palal has become God, but not that he may repose in indolent sloth. It is for him to press the udders of numerous cows, for him to milk at matins and at vespers. He has the Kavilals, Vorchals, and Palkarpals to assist him. Milking is his almost exclusive occupation; but, once more, remember that the Todas take him for their Supreme Being. They have desired a God in flesh and blood that they may not lose sight of him. Finding translunary deities, who do not always hear us, somewhat unpractical, they take others to suit themselves. They care little for an impersonal god, a purely metaphysical being of the reason, so they have given themselves a god of their own race, flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone, God-Man and Man-God.

Through his mediation, the people maintain good relations with the sun, the moon, the winds, converse with the powers of heaven and earth and of the Am-nôr, powers

invisible but ever present. The Palal enters into communication with them. When he wakes from his slumber—for he sleeps like the rest of the world—when he arises, as I have said, from his couch, he salutes nature and bids her good-morning! With calm tranquillity, he casts around him the peaceful glance of a being who has "The Good Eye." Thanks to the rays emanating from his forehead, the calves prosper, horns harden, udders are filled, grass grows, trees bear fruit. The "Mascot" washes his hands and face—a worthy example;—he brushes his teeth with his left hand (Todas, who are mere mortals, brush theirs with the right), then he transforms a leaf into a lamp with five burners, which he lights, after having filled it with clarified butter. Why? To invite his brother, the sun, to give his light to the world. This duty accomplished, he seizes—a trident? the thunderbolts?—a slender, fragile white wand, the sceptre of peace, and, taking a pail, goes to the cows, who have fallen into their places of their own accord, and are awaiting him before the door. The Palal extends his wand (there are still old peasants in Westphalia and Normandy who tell wonders of a certain rowan or juniper rod with which sick cows must be "touched"), and slowly passes his switch over the horned heads, turning it round from right to left.

When he returns with full buckets, he pours out a libation to the gods, his friends and companions, and to the benignant earth; he sprinkles every bell. These magic bells from Am-nôr are in sympathetic relation with the animal who carries them; and when these have more of the precious liquid than they can contain, the cow's udder must fill and overflow.

Let us be grateful to these worthy Todas for having set up before our eyes the image of a "God who dwells amongst men and goes before their face." Being herdsmen themselves, they have made this God a herdsman. But they do not want for other divinities; wicked and terrible

ones, man-eaters, blood-quaffers, slayers and exterminators. Moreover, there are some who have worked at a useful trade: amongst them ploughers and sowers like old Saturn, potters like Kneph, or blacksmiths like Ilmarinen. The God acknowledged by Jean Jacques Rousseau, citizen of Geneva, is a watchmaker, who has constructed the world after the fashion of a chronometer. But the dairyman God, maker of cheese and butter, is an original conception.

The sovereigns who reigned over the Nile were so many "Epiphanies" or divine apparitions. Under the Roman Empire, artists gave to gods and goddesses the features of the reigning monarch and his wife: it was the most delicate flattery to represent Apollo beneath the features of Octavius or to consecrate to Octavius the statues of Apollo, the Beautiful. The divine Cæsars, Caligula or Heliogabalus, did not die; they entered upon apotheosis. And how many a little nigger, how many a muddy-coloured Soulouque, is taken by his people for a god, actually a god! The King of Loango is God, and commands the thunder and lightning. His great-uncle on the mother's side created the heavens with their armies of stars, the earth and sea, the mountains and rivers. A missionary, calling himself ambassador of the great God of the Christians, showed a crucifix to a Cacique, who, in 1729, was reigning in a forest of the Marañon,—"What have I to do with your pale-faced God? I am God myself, the child of the Sun. Each night my spirit journeys from earth to heaven, where I attend to the administration of the universe."[1] The queer fellow believed in his own divinity. One of his contemporaries, in some forgotten nook of Magdalena, gravely narrated how he had created the world.

"The God worshipped in California is different in each village. They themselves choose an aged Indian, whom they exalt to this lofty dignity, . . . to get rain, favourable weather for the harvest, and other favours. . . . They offer him

[1] Bastian, *Culturländer Americas.*

sacrifices, the first fruits of the crops, and the game. When there is war, they place the old man on a hillock in the middle of an enclosure made of strongly braced stakes; it is entered by an underground passage, with an opening fifteen yards from the palisade, so that they are in continual communication with their god, to whom they carry victuals, and whom they defend against the attacks of enemies."[1]

The Emperor of Mexico swore that he would be Houitzilopochtli upon earth, cause the day-star to shine, the rivers to flow; he pledged his word to give rich and abundant harvests.[2] The princeling of the Antayntours, a Malagasy, is so good as to cause the forests to break into leaf, and it is by his aid that the ewes yeen. The Master of Widdah explained:—"Myself, I am the equal of God. Such as you behold me, I am his complete portrait."[3] Oppokou, king of the Ashantees, was more modest:—"The God of heaven is perhaps rather more powerful than I."[4]

There is not a pin to choose between all these wondrous and amazing potentates and the Grand Natchez of Florida. The confederation, over which he had the honour to preside, was headed by a lofty nobility, a haughty oligarchy composed of five hundred warriors, every one of whom, by his commanding air, his exploits in the chase, his prowess in the field, had given proof of his solar descent. This half thousand of heroes gravitated around the Great Sun, centre of constellations, chief of the peoples. And each morning the King of Kings, Master of the Empyrean, came out of his tent, saluted the four points of the compass in a friendly manner, and complimented Notus and Boreas, Eurus and Zephyrus. He took his station upon the rock which served him for a throne. Calumet in hand, he waited until Phœbus made his appearance, waved his hand to him, and held out the pipe that he might draw a few whiffs. Calm and grave, he showed him the road he ought to pursue from

[1] Don Pedro Fages, *Voyage en Californie.* [2] Gomara.
[3] Allen. [4] Bastian, *Völkerpsychologie.*

his rising to his setting:—"Listen, Sun! do thy duty! Neither stop nor linger! Turn out of thy course neither to the right hand nor to the left! Hail!"

Civilised men, amongst whom belief in a personal God grows weaker day by day,—civilised men, with their vague idea of an indefinable Supreme Being,—will think the pretensions of these paltry kinglets grotesque; will wonder at the trivial absurdity of these wretched Todas, who grant their head dairyman the attributes of omnipotence. They will protest that it is madness for a mortal to believe himself immortal, not to recognise that he is subject to the thousand accidents of daily life, to the numberless frailties of existence, to all the chances which inflict humiliation on our wisdom and ruin the plans we hold most prudent and well arranged.

All that is a modern conception. The ancients thought otherwise, were accustomed to mingle the ideas of order, morality, and justice with those of administration, government, and personal power. If we are to believe them, Nature must have begun with chaos, and would tend to return to its initial disorder, did not a more powerful Will create order and maintain it. Humanity would ask nothing better than to wallow in excess and immerse itself in crime, if monarchs were not there to repress cupidity and violence, and impose upon the nations the bridle of law. In conceptions of this sort it is not always easy to distinguish between the God who delegates his powers to man, and man who receives his powers from God. This is why the Hindoo doctrine teaches that Indra sends no rain upon a kingdom which has lost its king.[1] Ulysses—the wise Ulysses—explained to the discreet Penelope:—"Under a virtuous prince the earth brings forth barley and wheat in abundance, trees are loaded with fruit, ewes yeen several times in succession, and the sea is filled with fish. Of so great worth is a good leader."[2] Such is also the opinion of the Chinese, who hold their Emperor responsible for droughts and inundations, winds and frosts.

[1] Mahabharata, ii. 1205; iv. 931. [2] Odyssey, xix. 108.

But, upon reflection, are our modern ideas upon the principle of authority sensibly superior to those of savages? Have not the theorists of divine right put forth the dictum that their monarch can do everything; yes, everything? And have not their rivals, the philosophers of constitutionalism, given utterance to the axiom that their king is, like a pair of scales, incapable of being in the wrong? Need we cite the Pontiff, whose seat is at the Vatican, when we have, in each country town, magistrates incapable of condemning an innocent person, incapable of deciding against truth and justice? Do not the impeccability and infallibility which they enjoy constitute the essence of divinity? After all, infallibility in the matter of milk and curds is not less rational than infallibility in the matter of dogma or of moral responsibility; and the mistakes of the cheesemaker, should he commit any, have less disastrous consequences. In any case, the mountaineers of the Neilgherries say what they believe, and believe what they say. The depth of their rudely simple definition of religion ought to be gauged by the spiritually minded amongst us; but no,—they are occupied in watering, and watering again, the dilution of dilutions which once was ancient orthodoxy. When a Toda was interrogated as to the religion of the Curumbas:—

"What!" returned he, shrugging his shoulders; "these Curumbas have a religion! These beggars have no cows, and they have gods!"

Simple as the Todas are, they cannot be reproached with sinking into mere idle sentimentality. They have understood that religion and property are inseparable, the latter inspiring the former; their own special providence acts policeman for their wealth. That there are gods only for the rich is a doctrine which, on careful investigation, seems ancient and universal. The Greco-Romans made it the corner-stone of their ancient City;[1] and they shared this conviction with the Aryans, who bluntly

[1] Fustel de Coulanges.

said,—"Without wealth, no sacrifice; without sacrifice, no god."

Accordingly, "acquire wealth, O men, that you may be able to offer *soma*, clarified butter, food to the gods."[1] Tshanda Gosaïn is a powerful god, say the Paharis of Bengal, and it is only the rich who can address him.[2] The rich Karenes exclude poor cultivators from their Rogations. "Without pork to eat, without arak to drink, how can one pray?" exclaimed a Chinese coolie.[3]

Just as Christians in the Middle Ages occasionally pledged their most sacred relics to Jewish usurers, so Todas in the clutches of famine go to the Badagas to borrow grain on a deposit of divinities, on a remittance of bell cows and sacred bulls.

The traveller Marshall, curious to behold the treasures of their basilicas, bribed a God who had retired on his pension.

"He was aged, wrinkled, dishevelled, dirty; yet the austere and gloomy glance, the rigid brow, the unchanging and solemn expression, retained traces of the divinity so long exercised. I invited him to dinner; under the influence of bread and sugar, delicacies to which he was unaccustomed, his countenance grew less stern, he deigned to be affable. At dessert we fell into conversation.

"'Is it true that the Todas adore the sun?'

"'Tschak! These poor people do indeed adore him. But not all. I,' he drew himself up and complacently tapped his chest, 'why should I adore the sun? Am I not myself God?'"

And for a small gratuity the ex-cousin of the mighty Titan surreptitiously crept into the sanctuary which he had so long filled with his presence. Forbidding any to follow him, he showed from afar off some old iron, jars, porringers, and spoons. There was nothing else. The indiscreet visitor was disappointed. But had he entered the Capitol at Rome, had the Palladium of the Acropolis at Athens

[1] Wilson, *Vishnu Purana*. [2] Dalton. [3] Brau de Saint Paul Lias.

and at Mycene been unveiled before him, had he been introduced into the dark sanctuaries of Thebes and Argos, he would not have seen much more. And yet this Palal who played tricks with his sacred mysteries, this Palal believed in himself, had faith in his own divinity. And why not? Why should he deny august qualities which every one recognised in him?

Certainly, with these few scraps of information it would be easy for any one in the trade to construct a whole theology, to develop them into well co-ordinated doctrines. But would he have any right to do so? And would the Todas understand much of the dogmatic faith ascribed to them? Primitive men have some rudimentary ideas, some vague moral, religious, and philosophic perceptions, which after being refined, elucidated, and arranged, would yield a system neither better nor worse than many others; but they have not elaborated this system, just because they are still primitive.

The heralds of the Gospel have toiled for two generations to inculcate the notion of sin, have preached again and again of the torments of hell, of the devil, and eternal punishment. But there! These poor creatures cannot comprehend the possibility of unpardonable offences, protest against the worm which dieth not and the fire which is not quenched, against rancour that devours without ceasing, and hatred that never pardons. For chastisement beyond the tomb, they have not yet been willing to accept more than a marsh, where the guilty will be delivered over to leeches, but only for a time proportionate to the faults committed. Until then they had thought, like a Badaga, that to get rid of one's faults it sufficed to load a cow and her calf with them. O Terror of Isaac! God of Bossuet, and thou, O Christ of Calvin, what simplicity! what ignorance![1]

Yet every act of their life bears the stamp of devotion. The Toda inclines himself before the sun rising in the east,

[1] Exodus xii. 53, xxxi.

inclines himself before the moon, raises his hand to his forehead and, covering his nose with the thumb, recites a prayer summing up his needs, his desires, his affections. "May our boys grow and prosper! May it be well with our men, as with the cows and heifers! May each be in health and have his wishes!"

It is a moving spectacle, relates Mr Marshall, when the father of a family goes forth into the moonlight and implores the benediction of the fountain of light. Before beginning a meal, each takes a morsel, lifts it to his temples and consecrates it, saying:—"Behold, O Lord!" then lays it upon the ground as an offering to Boumo-Taï, the maternal earth.

As a secondary worship, they revere spirits and petty divinities, patrons of villages, protectors of springs, dwellers in forests and caves, such as the woodland Betikhân, faun and hunter. They fast during eclipses. Missionaries have made them say that the Creator of the worlds is called Asoura-Souami, and that he is Fire-Light, but they know no more about him. About the sacrament of ordination Toda theologians teach, contrary to Catholic dogma, that it is mutable, may always be revoked, that its efficacy depends only on the offices performed, that it is lawful to set it aside, but that to resume its functions, reconsecration is necessary. We refer them to the Council of Trent. Compared to the grand dogmatisms, the complex conglomeration where logic and good sense strive in a magma of mysteries, in a labyrinth of metaphysics, the religion we have called that of the Cow is refreshingly simple; its easy good-nature is disarming. "Doubtless," say these worthy mountaineers, "our religion is not made for you; but it suffices us, and we prefer it to any other. We believe in our Palal. The divinity we have conferred upon him, he exercises to our entire satisfaction; and if we were discontented with him—well! we should dismiss him and take another!"

However, the majesty of his office makes a vast solitude about the God; his rigorous isolation cannot fail to be painful in the long run. His divinity, being taken quite seriously by every one, puts him outside the pale of humanity. People do not venture to look at him; they fear to meet him. Non-suited of family joys, foreclosed of all relations with human beings, he is shut up in his majesty as in a cage.

What wonder that he grows tired of over-strict sublimity, and that, lifted so high, he aspires to descend? He could beat a retreat if any one were willing to take his place; but this laborious and absorbing existence is not made for vulgar ambitions. The God who abdicates, resigning without over-much regret the empire of the cowshed and its measureless responsibility, lays aside his mantle of office, his Ægis, gloomy as that of Jupiter. He stretches himself, gives himself a shake, and quits the Holy of Holies naked as he came into it; for the Toda, in his innocent simplicity, does not understand that he to whom the interests of the community are confided has time to look after his own affairs, does not suppose that Providence can realise small profits.

Some Palals, who have resigned and returned to the condition of mere mortals, have sickened for the lost divinity, have wished to reascend the empyrean; they have taken office once more on the first vacancy, but have been obliged to pass a second time through all the trouble and fatigue of investiture.

Let us pass to the Badagas.

It is now recognised that all religions, and we do not except even those which are monotheistic, are engrafted upon Animism or demon-worship, the said demons being originally confounded with the souls of the dead. The genii are much inclined to haunt the purlieus of their ancient dwellings. The good and the evil are to be found

amongst their number, or, to speak more accurately, the same genius who is evil to all the rest of the world, is good to his old friends, his tribe-folk, and his adorers; especially when they have been considerate enough to provide him a home, in the form of amulets carried about their person.

Badaga children are insured against miscellaneous accidents by talismans, kneaded from earth and ashes taken from funeral pyres. Todas who have passed into another life are less obliging; at least the survivors carefully close the hole when they have buried the belongings of the departed, roll a stone upon it, touch it with their foreheads as a last token of respect, and make off, fearing to be laid hold of if they stop to look back; for the spirit in his first vexation, and whilst he is not accustomed to his novel position, is liable to give way to a troublesome propensity to kill people, without a motive, and often in spite of himself, or even from affection. When an epidemic breaks out, it is the person who died last, rushing through the country and consuming his kindred.

The Gauls and Scythians worshipped a sword. The Badagas venerate a long-rusted knife, with which one of their heroes put an end to himself. Suicides, those who have been murdered, women dying in childbirth, boys and girls carried off before they have tasted the pleasures of love (remember the *Bride of Corinth*, sung by Goethe), those who perish prematurely, and, in general, all who die a violent death, have the reputation of being vexed and unquiet, spiteful and treacherous. Their power is proportionate to their malevolence. The spirit of a suicide haunts the bloody blade, elects to dwell there. It will be borne in triumph and placed in a chapel, where a lamp will burn day and night.

A Badaga woman told that she had seen a stone sweating blood. The news was received with enthusiasm; at that very time the village God had just been stolen by envious neighbours.[1] Doubtless the blood-tinged stone gave refuge

[1] *Cf. Judges* xviii., &c.

to the soul of a murdered man. Now there is no sturdier or more active demon than that of an individual slain in the flower of his strength, and still exasperated by the murder of which he has been the victim. A malicious God is sought, just as a peasant seeks a ferocious watchdog to chain at his door. The boulder was, therefore, set up as patron saint.

Demons deliver oracles, either at fixed periods or when specially required. To obtain them the tomtoms create an uproar, the tambourines vie with one another. The "medium" comes; all are silent to salute him. He enters the midst of the circle and brandishes a trident, the infernal sceptre borne by Siva, by Pluto, and also by the Christian devil. Naked, save for a narrow loin cloth, striped with red, white, and yellow, he comes and goes, flings his arms backwards and forwards, leaps, contorts himself, bounds, twirls after the manner of a dancing dervish, and when the fitting moment arrives walks upon red hot coals. Long howls accompany the orchestra, the measure grows faster, the cries become more piercing; blood is given him to drink. Suddenly he seems to be violently shaken, he trembles all over, his eyes start from their sockets with a savage glare. The God has seized upon him, holds him fixed, rigid, haggard, pours out upon him the intoxication of prophecy. Behold him exhorting the by-standers, delivering oracles, answering questions as to both worlds. Then, abruptly he closes the consultation, says he is hungry and thirsty. If he is a God of importance, he is served with cocoa-nut milk and fried rice; a mere imp will content himself with a little meat and some arak.

On every occasion the problem is the same,—to induce the demon invoked, whether he be the demon of pestilence or typhoid fever, of rats or caterpillars, of tiger or crocodile, of wind or cold, of tree or rock, to enter into the body of the dancer.[1] Once lodged there, it becomes possible to act

[1] Monier Williams.

upon him, to influence him. He is, therefore, made to eat and drink, is flattered and amused. He can certainly be beguiled and made a fool of, possibly be cast out, sometimes even tortured in revenge for the maladies and sufferings he has inflicted. Have the Todas any differences to settle relating to women or cattle (the only things they care about)? they apply to one of their under-milkmen, who, whether he likes it or not, begins to dance, skips, capers, scourges himself, howls, shouts, and rolls his eyes. The task is exhausting, and his body streams with slaver and sweat. In this condition the demon pronounces oracles, profound in proportion to their incomprehensibility.

Demon-worship upon the Neilgherries, despite its innate cruelty and brutality, has not the same repulsive character to be observed elsewhere. These potentates from beyond the grave are not exacting; their ministers are content with modest perquisites—milk, fruit, poultry; in warm countries appetite becomes moderate. The orgies of demon-worship assume the character of the surrounding population. Amongst the milk-drinkers they are relatively mild; elsewhere their devotees pride themselves on being cannibalistic, drunken with potations of blood. And yet everywhere there is an appearance of kinship in these performances.

"To assuage the hunger of White Tiger, a whole pig was put in a cauldron to cook. The maddened *Shaman* seized a child in either hand, and began to dance. He pirouetted, sprang backwards and forwards, twirled, finally became the tiger. Plunging his head into the boiling cauldron, he drew forth a strip of meat with his teeth for the little whelp! He plunged again for the other whelp, again for the Old Tiger!"[1]

Demon-worship explains the mysteries of Zagreus, and, in general, all Chthonic and Bacchic rites. If we knew nothing otherwise of the orgies of Dionysus and the Great Mother, we could obtain a sufficiently correct idea of them by visiting the Ghâts, the Neilgherries, and the Vindhyas.

[1] Dennys, *Folklore in China*.

"Many a time, when, according to Anglo-Indian custom, I was riding before sunrise, I have met their bands returning from nocturnal revels. A tall and fine race, these inhabitants of the western slopes. When I saw these torches blazing beneath the pine trees, and these flower-crowned women, with their antique draperies of brilliant colours, I seemed to gaze upon Bacchantes and Mœnads, whilst Mount Citheron shook to the sounds of clarion and cymbal."[1]

The ascetic life led by these divine herdsmen, their persuasion that they are brethren and fellows of the Sun, gains the fear and respect of strangers for the Todas. The Badagas would long ago have ceased to pay the few bushels of grain demanded by the self-styled suzerains of the soil, did not a palkarpal descend now and again from the upper regions. Every one falls down before him, with face upon the earth; he commands, and all obey in terror, lest he should let loose rot or farcy amongst the flocks and herds. No one would dare to displease him.

The Curumba, also, is a born sorcerer. The Toda respects the Curumba; the Curumba respects the Toda. The poor Badaga dreads both; being both herdsman and cultivator he fears everything from every one, but mainly from the sickly, ill-favoured, hungry Curumba, who passes for a woodland beast rather than a man. Children have fallen into convulsions, women dropped down dead in the forest, from coming upon him unawares. In addition, the Badaga has also to keep out of the way of the humble Frula. Fear emanates from divinity, like rays from the sun. The children of Israel swore by the "terrible God"; trembling, they said that none can "look upon the Eternal and live." *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor.*

Powerful is the demon who looks out from the greedy eye of a Curumba. This is why the timid Badaga makes this savage his officiating priest in ordinary, though in his

[1] Walhouse.

own city he has the Harouarous, sixth of the eighteen castes, a tribe of Levites, servants of the bull Bassava, priests of the conical temple containing the stone *Maha linga* in the very form of the divine Phallus. These evil-eyed Curumbas possess a whole treasury of incantations, prayers, and charms. At harvest time, to cause the storehouses to overflow, they take a basket, which they fill with grain till it runs over. The Harouarous are influenced by the Brahmins, whom they imitate or mimic; but just because they have pretensions, just because their shamanism is tinged with respectability, they are less successful than the adjacent low sorcerers. The rudest savage is the one applied to by preference,[1] because he is supposed to be the most familiar with the habits of evil genii and the spots haunted by them. Besides, demon-worship pleases uncultured minds; the more barbarous and unreasonable it appears, the more attractive it is.

The Curumba, then, is a wizard. He has bewitched the hen dying of the pip, he has wished ill-luck to the calf that does not improve, he has cast his evil eye upon the cow that grows thin. If a man dies, his illness is the doing of these scoundrels. One day, Todas and Badagas united to exterminate them, but the rascals escaped into the woods. Dreaded by every one, they have everything to fear; their life is in perpetual danger. At any moment they may be set upon by an exasperated crowd, impatient to avenge some imaginary misdeed. Not one of them but has been maltreated, and had a few stones thrown at him. And each assault is a title of honour; they are flattered that a power they would like to possess is attributed to them. Like the Norman sorcerers, they "like better to be supposed to exercise the profession of swindling than to be swindled themselves."[2] Gratified by the evil reputation they enjoy, they offer to undo what they are supposed to have done, to remove the spells they are accused of having cast. The

[1] Dalton. [2] Bosquet, *La Normandie Romantique.*

wheat is smutty, the flocks have the scab? Somebody's head aches, some one's stomach is out of order? One of these rogues turns up, offers to eject the demon; as it happens, the evil spirit is one of his particular cronies! He will cast out Beelzebub by Beelzebub. The corn-fields are ravaged by insects? The remedy is at hand; let a Curumba go on all fours and bleat like a calf.

Each village keeps one or two of these blackguards in its pay, to contrive exorcisms, and bawl incantations, to guide the first plough, sow the first seed, reap the first sheaf, strike the first blow with the flail, knead and bake the first cake, as may be required.

"The entire family was present at the inauguration of the work, over which two or three Curumbas presided. One laid upon the earth a stone, which he covered with wild flowers; prostrating himself, he perfumed it with incense, sprinkled it with the blood of a he-goat. Then he seized the plough, guided it for a minute or two, and gave the handle to the peasant; after which he retired, carrying with him the head of the sacrificed beast. At harvest, he loads himself, in payment for his services, with as many sheaves as his back can carry; and after threshing, he claims the sixtieth as his share and allowance."[1]

The august functions performed by the Curumbas on Badaga Ember Days do not hinder them from playing the parts of mummers, dancers, or flute and tambourine players on other occasions. Sorcerer and mountebank, priest and buffoon, sharper and artist, truly a well-filled *rôle!* The poor Badagas have bethought themselves of making the Curumba drink milk on certain occasions, being persuaded that this pure, white beverage, drawn from the udder of that virtuous creature, the cow, will whiten his soul, inspire him with candour. The Curumba lets them do as they like. He reminds us of the wild Thessalians, to whom the civilised ancients attributed terrible powers, and also of those

[1] Harkness.

Jews of the Middle Ages, whose fame was long associated with demons, those Jews whom the Synod of Elvira forbade the faithful to summon, that they might charm the fields. During several centuries, Christians stole to the darkest retreats of the Ghettos, there to consult necromancers and fortune-tellers, though, or for the very reason that, they were the crucifiers of Christ. The Jewish physician was long preferred to any other; for he was reputed a master in alchemy, in astrology, in black magic. The Old Testament, whether in Hebrew or in Latin, was considered a dreadful conjuring book.

Look carefully at these priests and beggars of the jungle, these casters of lots and settlers of bones, these pilferers and stage-players; keep them in mind. These humble ancestors of sacerdotal castes enable us to understand why the ministers of the altar, despite the respectability, the enormous powers and all-mastering influence they have known how to acquire, have never washed out the original stain. Even those who kneel before them, believe them ravens of misfortune, birds of evil omen; fear to meet them, to have them for travelling companions. The people have a vague but indelible recollection that the oracles, delivered to-day in the name of angels of light, were formerly given forth from a vent hole of hell. They remember to have known these servants of the Most High as imps of the devil, and are suspicious of them. They are suspicious, but the more suspicious they are, the easier they are to dupe.

Being persuaded that a missionary coming from Europe was a far superior sorcerer to those of native growth, the Todas and Badagas made him heartily welcome. They asked nothing better than to believe whatever he liked, but insisted that he should rid them of those horrid Curumbas, who ruined the fruit, made the cows barren and dried up the springs of their milk. Greatly astonished were they, and disappointed, when the preacher of the Gospel refused to organise a massacre of his rivals, or even to carry them

off by a convenient pestilence. However, they were forced to recognise that the English God, Lord of rifles and bayonets, Master of cannon and whisky, had a longer arm than Cotorou Peiki, or even Siva and his bull Bassava. In the hope of courting his favour, they raised a chapel to him, where they laid in state a Tamul New Testament, given them by the proselytisers as the great decree of the Eternal Jehovah, the secret of salvation, the summary of all science, the revelation of all the mysteries of heaven, earth, and hell. Soon the legend became current that, every night, the Jesus of the Ferringhis came to taste the milk and bananas laid upon his altar. Unfortunately, an epidemic breaking out soon after, the aforesaid Jesus was held responsible for it, because the missionary had but lately been preaching that not a hair, not a bird, can fall to the ground without his express will and his sovereign command.

It became necessary to set their minds at rest. They referred the matter to the ancient national divinities. Some priests approached the oracle and consulted it, throwing flowers the while:

"Is he who is called Jesus Christ a good Souami?"

Most of the flowers fell to the left; so the strange God was not a good Souami. And the Curumbas, though enemies of the *Gourous*, *Vodiarous*, and *Cauacourous*, confirmed the response. There was no longer any doubt, the English fetish was of evil disposition, it was dangerous to be near him. Whatever it may have cost them, the inhabitants emigrated, deserted fields and dwellings, left the chapel to the White Jesus and his book.

But the missionary in question, Metz, was as energetic as sincere in his convictions; he was attached to the peoples whom he had long studied. It is to him, I must observe, that science owes the best information about these tribes; information which he generously imparted to all the travellers, who, one after another, visited the Neil-

gherries. Resolved, despite all this, to save perishing souls, and, moreover, counting upon energetic English protection, he too emigrated, and went into another district to found a school, for which he obtained a Government grant. The children readily learned reading, writing, and arithmetic, but showed invincible repugnance to address Jesus in their own language. One day, he bethought him of beginning the class by an invocation to Jesus Christ, charging the scholars to repeat it; the whole covey took wing, some by the door, others by the window. He set out in pursuit, caught some fugitives and asked them: "What is the matter with you? What made you rush off?" The brats answered, sobbing: "Let us go! We will not be Christians! No, no! If we say the *mantroum* of the Christians, Christ will hear, Christ will come, Christ will carry us off!"

Everything is relative; these Badagas and their offspring appear superior to their neighbours in Travancore, who did not venture even to touch an English book, for fear the demon of the printed scrawl should send elephants to trample and ravage the crops. *Principiis obsta!* "Give them an inch, and they take an ell."

Despite his want of success, the evangelist was highly respected; every one was afraid to offend this great sorcerer, to whom they gave the queer appellation of "Three Quarters God," because, as they said, he did not fall far short of being God altogether. His power was never contested, but after he refused to countenance a young woman in an escapade with her lover, his good intentions ceased to be believed in; according to public opinion, he had neglected his duty as an honest man. And when he refused point blank to prove the truth of his mission by walking with bare feet upon red hot iron, a thing which the Harouarous do without being pressed, his reputation received a fatal blow. Had not this stranger declared, had he not repeated over and over again, that his Jesus took account of every hair, took account of the feathers of every bird? Had he not told the

story of the three youths, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, whom the king, Nebuchadnezzar, had thrown into a burning fiery furnace? Had he not asserted that they came out safe and sound?

"Very well, go thou and do likewise," was the conclusion of these *poor* Badagas. "Do likewise," repeated these ignorant Todas. And it was impossible to get it out of their heads.

CHAPTER VI.

THE KOLARIANS OF BENGAL, AND HUMAN SACRIFICES AMONGST THE KHONDS.

LINGUISTS and anthropologists, ethnologists and mythographists, each and all, find, or might have found, rich materials for their use in that district of India which receives the streams of the Vindhya and Adjanta Mountains, and empties them into the Gulf of Bengal by the Mahanady and Godavery. This region of beautiful landscapes and fertile fields might be thickly peopled, were it not for the vast swamps, which spread their poisonous miasma far and wide beneath the burning sky. The inhabitants of the plain are obliged to avoid them during six months in the year, Europeans during nine. Extensive districts have never been inhabited, except by primitive tribes, who generally live in isolated communities, maintaining but slight connection with neighbours of like name or kindred race. A barrier of mountains surrounds the gently undulating plateau. Magnificent rocks are scattered over it, some rising in rounded masses, others in ruinous fragments of fantastic shape.

The ethnical agglomeration in question may rank as indigenous, in so much as it is supposed to be of earlier origin than the Aryans, or even the Dravidians. It is subdivided into thousands of clans,[1] which we shall not attempt, even summarily, to classify; it is enough for us that they are designated by the collective appellation of Kolarians, derived from people of Kolh or Cole, whence the word *coolie*, which

[1] Beverley.

belongs to the international Frankish tongue.[1] The eastern portion of the plateau covers a superficial area of 2,790 square miles, at an average elevation of 2,000 feet. It is inhabited by a million of men, amongst whom more than half belong to savage or semi-savage tribes, subdivided into two great classes, Ooraons and Moondahs; these last the more ancient, if the tradition may be believed. In this human magma certain names are to be heard more frequently repeated than others: Sonthals, Bhils, Bhoomis, Hos, Birhors, Soorahs, Kherias, Korewars, Juangas or Pattoons, Larkas, Gonds.

The Khonds, to whom we shall devote special attention, have taken the name of the national sword, the *khande*, which they handle in a fashion of their own. Their name has also been derived from the Tamul word *koundrou*, a hill. This would make them "people of the uplands." They call themselves Kous.[2] From two hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand in number, they form sporadic groups round Bustar, Tchinna Kinnedy, Djeypour, Goumsor, Boad, and Despalla, their fortresses and principal centres.

It is for conquerors to tell the story of their conquest, and smirch the conquered with ignominy, that they may cover themselves with the greater glory; and this the Aryans have not failed to do in their legends and traditions. But a critical reading of these tales leads to the inference that the invaders encountered a long and obstinate resistance. Doubtless the aborigines defended themselves courageously, and their reverses alternated with success. They were not entirely subjugated, except on the sea littoral and in the basin of the Ganges; on the lower hills they were made vassals, in the highlands not encroached upon at all.

[1] Campbell; Beames, however, who is an authority in the matter, contests this etymology: "It is my opinion," he says, "that the connection which some have desired to establish between the kolh and *coolie* is purely imaginary."

[2] Caldwell.

Being unable to either conquer or enslave them all along the line, the victors avenged themselves by calling them apes, ground snakes, serpents, earth-born men, and confounded them of set purpose with the leopards and other animals who were their totems. The immigration inundated the great plain, where it implanted the race and language, doctrines and practices of the Aryan; but it did not rise high in the valleys. The flood scarcely passed the first buttresses of rock; the noise of battle never reached the upper pastures. The echoes of the deep valley were never awakened by the crash of arms, the uproar of revolution, the shock of empires overturned; the tiger of the jungle, the crocodile of the swamp, the demons of pestilence and fever defended the negro race. Abject poverty protected these creatures, who never possessed anything it would have been worth while to steal. And this state of things continued. It might have been thought that these aborigines, having nothing that could properly be called political organisation, being grouped only in thinly populated hamlets and villages, loose organisms without cohesion, would have succumbed to their internal dissensions upon the least attack from without. Yet they have survived the states which hemmed them in, though, or because, they have not risen to the conception of a State.

Not that several of these Kolhs and Khonds were not forced to recognise the supremacy of Orissa, proud of his wars and conquests, his glories and victories, who was in the zenith of his splendour in the days of Charlemagne and Haroun al Raschid. For ten centuries, from the fifth to the fifteenth, his kingdom imposed upon the inferior tribes a *modus vivendi*, which survived that kingdom's fall, was perpetuated under the Delhi Mussulman dynasty, and is in force, more or less, under the English domination. The sovereign, a sort of feudal emperor, commanded Maharajahs, Rajahs, Zemindars, and Paiks, to the number of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand, vassals of unequal power, wealth, and authority; as under the Holy

Roman Empire were the magnificent dukes and marquises, illustrious counts, powerful barons, petty lords, and poor knights-bannerets, who nevertheless were all knights and gentlemen, in the army the Emperor's "men," at court his servants, and on their own lands independent masters, exercising the greater and lesser jurisdiction. The suzerain's sceptre of Orissa lay heavily upon the greater feudatories, who in their turn pressed upon the lesser, and these again indemnified themselves from the indigenous plain-dwellers, amongst others, from the poor Soorahs, who sinking into cruel slavery, were treated as Helots. Being protected by the first line of marshes, the Kolhs and Khonds of the slopes were left in peace, on condition of bringing some jungle produce as a tribute to the Rajahs, and serving the temples and seignorial domains by work, for which they were not paid, whence their name of *vettiahs*, or men liable to enforced labour. As for their highland kinsfolk, the fevers that stand sentinel before the rampart of woods and swamps have secured their independence. In the fulness of their liberty, they contracted alliances with the neighbouring landed proprietors, and willingly took service with them for a campaign or two. The soil, being but indifferently cultivated, could ill nourish the scattered population, which was decimated by the unhealthy climate, by infanticide, and by frequent skirmishes between clans and tribes. Every year emigrants still come down to seek a living in the lowlands; they find quarters according to their castes and trades, and become woodcutters, mechanics, sailors, messengers, porters, or get employment as domestic servants, shepherds, or herdsmen. Some enrol themselves in bands of criminals, others in the army of repression. Until lately, their great resource was to take service with the Paiks, or vassals of the Crown, as archers and soldiers; after the fashion of the Swiss mountaineers who hired themselves out as *landsknechte* or men-at-arms, to the last and highest bidder, were it the Pope of Rome, Republic of Venice or of Florence, King of

France, or Emperor of Germany. The Khonds have been in demand as soldiers at all times; princes would have no one else for their bodyguard, and gave a good price for their services, knowing them to be sober and unwearying, being aware that they came of a martial race, difficult upon the point of honour, punctual in all engagements, ready to be cut to pieces sooner than break their word. Sovereigns could not do otherwise than appreciate the striking bravery, the chivalrous valour of these men who were always anxious for the post of danger, even demanded it as their right, and who were passionately attached to their chief, however little he deserved it, or even if he did not deserve it at all.

In the course of ages civilisation began to gain upon the barbarism of the mountaineers; the religious ideas and social practices of the plain crept in amongst them; the influences of Brahminism, of Buddhism, and finally of Islamism, penetrated into the remotest cantons, awoke the most distant echoes. Nevertheless, until within the last fifty years, the interior districts remained unknown, and therefore independent. But now there come English travellers, missionaries of every denomination and description, traders, engineers, soldiers. Histories of conquests are all alike. The East India Company came to an understanding with local magnates and made themselves friends; the rich and powerful have no great difficulty in doing so with the poor and needy, who easily become jealous of one another. By and by, fine carriage roads made their appearance, and upon these were to be seen infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Noiselessly, without threat or disturbance, the red coats advanced step by step, occupying the strategical points, and from thence making the influence of money felt throughout the neighbourhood. The rising tide covered one position and turned another. The lord of many a castle learned to his cost that his rock was not impregnable; many a squireen was brought to reason. The open enemy was crushed, the evil-minded were isolated, the dubious were bought. Clever

officers, men who understood how to haste at their leisure, how to speak words of accommodation, and supplement them with a neatly placed present, gained position after position. English diplomacy, the Calcutta government, point with pride to results which have cost them a relatively insignificant expenditure in men and money. Now-a-days the territory is overrun by continually increasing numbers of visitors; the immigrants are bringing other needs and interests, other industries and manners. The new-comers state that the soil is favourable for many sorts of cultivation; that much of the country is pleasant, some of it magnificent and grand; that it is well worth while to leave the burning plains, pass rapidly through the pestilential regions, and settle in the pure air and healthy climate of the highlands. The European sets on foot improvements, organises hunting expeditions, grows enthusiastic over this wild nature, interested in these primitive peoples, wishes to instruct and civilise them. They will not survive so much sympathy. It is the beginning of the end.

As far as type is concerned, the dissimilarities between Aryan and non-Aryan are too marked not to strike the most uninformed observer. Amongst Hindoos, the human animal is of a lighter colour, has a more capacious skull, a better proportioned and more graceful figure, more regular features, a pleasanter physiognomy. Amongst the aboriginal populations disagreeable faces and repulsive ugliness abound. If one were willing, even to a slight extent, to adopt the sort of generalisation in use amongst so many travellers, and, indeed, amongst learned ethnologists, it would be easy to prove that these mountaineers are superb or that they are repulsive. Some of them are handsome, some are very ugly, and a number are passable. Howard found amongst the Khonds, whom we have particularly in view, a semi-Mongolian, semi-Caucasian physiognomy; their foreheads were broad and sometimes protuberant, their eyes large and expressive,

their faces triangular, their hair black and abundant, but beards were rare. Shortt says that they are of medium height, about five feet four. Hunter confines himself to the statement that they are as tall as the Hindoos, that their muscles are well defined, that their speed is great in running, and that their foreheads are broad and their lips full, but not excessively so. "Their vigour, their intelligence, their resolution, and their invariable jocularity make them pleasing companions or terrible enemies." Dalton, the great authority on Bengalese ethnology, thus speaks of some of their neighbours :—

"The Hos and Larkas, the nucleus of the Moondah nation, and certainly the most interesting and shapely part of it, have an upright carriage and manly bearing. They have the aspect of a free people, justly proud of their independence. Their facial angle is the same as that of the Aryans, and their features often not at all inferior to those of the Hindoos. The nose is large, the full lips are well cut, the teeth splendid. The absence of costume permits a detailed examination of their figures, which are frequently fit models for a sculptor."

This description, which is true of the dwellers in well cultivated districts, living in a comfort that would be envied by the agricultural labourers of Great Britain, would be inexact if applied to the less favoured inhabitants of forest cantons, whose faces are ugly. When the Moondahs are not of Circassian type, they seem to approach the Mongol rather than the negro; they have prominent cheek bones, half-shut, somewhat oblique eyes, flat faces, thin hair, and a complexion either tan-coloured or swarthy. They are of medium height. The monkey-like Ooraons, most ill-favoured of any, are small, but well proportioned, rarely short and squat. The young people of both sexes, who are as restless as squirrels, have thin, lively faces. Localities where the race is mixed show a remarkable variety of features and colouring. Where the race is less mingled, hideous blacks abound, with large mouths, thick lips, prognathous jaws,

ridiculously flat noses, wide nostrils, retreating foreheads, and hair as frizzled as the wool of the negro.

Hunting and savagery seem almost synonymous. These tribes are backward in proportion to the part played by hunting in their means of subsistence, are more savage as they are less agricultural. Yet the vegetable layer of the plateau is not over thin, and there is no want of rain; but in some places the streams rush down in devastating torrents, and in others stagnate in swamps, infecting the air with their pestilential exhalations. The soil is ill managed, ill cultivated. The poorest, who live on the spontaneous produce of the underwood, look on all meat as good for food, —dog, horse, jackal, frog, living flesh, butcher's meat, sound or rotten,—they turn all to account; tigers and snakes, crocodiles and insects, all go into the larder. They cannot be anything but objects of horror to the Hindoos, who would rather die than taste a fibre of ox or cow, and to the Mussulmans, who hold pork in abhorrence, and construe the word Kolh as "pig-killers," a nickname by which the guilty parties are but slightly affected. The Brahmins and Mussulmans consider it a crime in the nomad Birhors that they are man-eaters; but we do not reproach them for it, as their cannibalism is inspired by filial piety. The parents, *in articulo mortis*, beg as a favour that their corpses may not be left upon the road or in the forest, but may find a refuge in the stomachs of their children. These cannot refuse, but they make no unseemly haste to enjoy the funeral banquet.

"They accept any food from any source," say the disdainful Brahmins of these savages. The former consider their own substance to be highly refined, because they touch only choice viands, and these must be prepared in their own family. The law of the conquerors, personified in Manu, purposed by diversity of alimentation to eternalise the distinction of caste, to accentuate it from age to age, to constitute races entirely dissimilar, in both intellectual and moral,

as well as physical characteristics; impure sustenance procreated, it affirmed, ugly and rickety bodies, and stupid and degraded organisms, whilst pure sustenance formed strength and beauty, nobleness and intelligence in man. The system was seductive; it is supported by a certain amount of experience, and the physiology of the future will, I think, make valuable discoveries in this branch of research. At all events, this principle was proclaimed by the dominant race as an absolute truth, and implicitly admitted by the races subjugated or driven back, and by the more civilised tribes, who having settled into relatively comfortable dwellings, had attained to the use of the plough. To quote but one instance, the semi-savage, semi-civilised Ooraons, eat anything and everything during childhood and early youth, but after marriage, husband and wife become one sacred flesh, and administer to one another as a sacrament the salt by which they swear, in imitation of the Sonthals; the body thus purified will no longer be sustained by aught but pure nourishment, touched by no hand foreign to the tribe.

An Ooraon woman is enjoined to prepare her husband's meals, forbidden to partake of them. She contents herself with his leavings, following the example given by the Brahmin wife. Amongst most of the Kolhs, however, the wife sits at the same table as her lord and master, if table there be. The Khonds, on their side, abstain from food prepared by folks they account of inferior caste, and prohibit the meat of dogs and domestic cats, serpents and animals of prey, like jackals, kites, and vultures. Once weaned, they never touch milk of any sort again.

In consequence of inveterate abstinence, the Hindoo race hold strong drink in aversion. From the height of their own rigorous sobriety, the Brahmins look down upon barbarians who make a pretext of every festivity to drink toddy with gusto, of all ceremonies to imbibe palm wine without a limit. When the maowah tree[1] is covered with its rich

[1] *Bassia latifolia.*

harvest of perfumed blossoms, which are believed to cure almost every sickness, Khondistan is joyful, the elephants, all the herbivorous animals and some birds, regale themselves. If men want to monopolise the greater part, they are obliged to keep watch night and day. Not a cot but distils a heady liquor[1] from the petals; not a Khond man who does not get royally tipsy, not a Khond woman who does not take license to get a "little fresh." The English soldiers allow themselves greater latitude. Finding a certain resemblance between this liquor and Irish whisky, they get "gloriously drunk," holding their noses the while, as the odour is too strong for Europeans.

Wishing to entrench themselves behind an insurmountable barrier, the Aryans made it their policy to continually increase the distance between conquerors and conquered, to raise the first and degrade the second, physically, and, above all, intellectually; for no demarcation is deeper or more evident than that which separates the civilised man from the barbarian. They forbade that the noble arts of reading and writing should be transmitted to the inferior race. The Brahmin who communicated his formulas and liturgies, or explained the Vedas to the Helots, would have been looked upon as a traitor. Instruction develops faculties, heredity fixes them; no race therefore is more intelligent than the Hindoo, none has a more supple or subtle mind, none has created a richer or more learned language, grander poetry, more abstract and profound philosophy, more wonderful architecture, more extraordinary religions. Between high and low castes all immediate contact was looked on as abominable, and ended by seeming impossible. With rare sagacity, with really astonishing ingenuity, the victors set themselves to degrade those they had subjugated, to make them contemptible in their own eyes. The laws of Manu imposed shame and humiliation, poverty and ignorance, the most brutalising civil conditions

[1] *Deral.*

they could imagine, upon those "beings of black colour and bestial visage, less men than animals," whose breath contaminates the atmosphere, whose shadow poisons the food and even the water across which it falls. They gave them names like *Kolhs*, the swine, and *Poulayers*, the filth. They gave the right to any one soever to kill them, without the need of alleging a motive. But who would have soiled his hands by striking them? It was a defilement even to spit upon them, to spit in their face. And that their saliva might not infect the earth, they must carry a spittoon on their person.[1] Should a necessity arise for touching them, it must be done with a red-hot iron. The safest plan was to keep them at a distance: ninety-six feet between their hideous bodies and an august Brahmin was only just far enough; they must live outside all villages inhabited by worthy folk; they were commanded not to wear any raiment above the waist; to speak with their hand before their mouth, and then only to express themselves in their own dialect:[2] the noble speech of the conquerors must not be borne on stinking breath over those unclean lips. Let them not presume to say: "I, my rice, my wife, my children," but let them ejaculate in their gibberish such expressions as these: "Your slave, my dirty mess, my she-ape, my calf." Priests alone could have formulated such legislation as this, elevating ferocity into a system and making cruelty more delicious by seasoning it with insult. It was a master-stroke of this policy to forbid the conquered progress and instruction. It was enjoined upon Hindoos in general, and upon Brahmins in particular, to cultivate their minds, to steep themselves in poetry and in sacred literature, the summary of all science; it was forbidden to the aborigines to touch, to look upon, a book. That the servitude of the vanquished might be more irrevocable, legislation forbade all changes which might hâve ameliorated

[1] *Kortgars*, Walhouse.

[2] Not Aryan, related to Tamul and Telougu (Beames).

their condition. Had they lost their flocks by a raid? They were forbidden to acquire new ones, forbidden to lay a finger upon the udder of a cow to milk her, forbidden to possess any animals but dogs and donkeys. Were their dwellings wretched? They were forbidden to build them with stone, or of several storeys, or to cover them with anything but thatch. The legislators preferred that they should be vagabonds with no attachment to the soil. They were forbidden to have whole vessels; they must use broken crockery. They were forbidden to wear jewellery of gold or silver, or any ornaments, except in brass, glass, or iron. The women were forbidden to cover their breasts, to wear shoes, to indulge in the luxury of a parasol, or to wash their clothes. They were commanded to dwell in dirt and stench.[1] The men were ordered to go naked; the only vesture allowed them was straw, or odds and ends, the tatters of the dead, or the rags left by criminals they might execute. This latter point needs explanation; tormentors and executioners being hated and despised, their office devolved upon the low castes. The knacker, the gravedigger, the flayer, and the public executioner were accounted brethren, and leather-dressers and tanners, curriers, saddlers, shoemakers, all vile trades, were bestowed upon them for sons or nephews. The law affected not to guarantee them any property, on the supposition that they could possess nothing of their own, unless by cheating and robbery. It condemned all those, whom it did not attach to the soil, to a life of vagabondage, forbidding them to approach honest houses, or to sojourn in towns and villages.

Amongst these prescriptions, dictated by hatred, several, we think, have never come into actual existence; they were only invented afterwards. A number of them have fallen into desuetude in the nature of things, and in consequence of the invasions of several religions opposed to Brahminism. But most of these iniquitous ordinances have been or

[1] Dubois, *Mœurs de l'Inde.*

remain in force, and time has consecrated them. Whole tribes have accepted the humiliation inflicted, and whilst accepting, have forgotten to resent, and ended by growing reconciled to it. Habit is second nature. For a long time the Nagas have forgotten to be indignant that they are compared to lepers: they gesticulate and whine, half hidden behind a hedge, beg a pittance, which is thrown to them, and dare not pick it up until the passer-by is some way off. It is stated that ignominy can go further, and that the jungles of Chittagong are the haunts of hordes fallen lower than many animals, hordes which no longer know anything of the permanent association of males and females for the breeding of young.[1] But it is permissible to doubt this assertion, until circumstantial evidence is produced.

A haughty theory that of founding domination upon intellectual and moral predominance! But however lofty their pride, the Hindoos had never full and entire consciousness of the absolute superiority they claimed; their hatred and contempt was continually sharpened by some fear. They fancied that the aborigines, all being sorcerers and formidable on account of their alliance with the demons of the soil, bewitched people, cast ill luck and spells upon every one, sucked away health and strength from a distance, donned the semblance of were-wolves, cobras, and crocodiles. Nothing could have persuaded them that the man-eating tiger and the snake whose bite was deadly were not these accursed scoundrels, disguised as beasts, for the purpose of working their wicked will. "The false rascals," says a sacred book, "have a ferocious eye which sucks out life." Compared to the possessors of true religion and true science, these wretches were doubtless but the "mad adorers of senseless deities;" but what if measles and smallpox waited upon their nod? Pestilence, cholera, smallpox are terrible divinities. Many a Lutheran buys the protection of a local saint, the favour of some Catholic virgin; many a

[1] Faulmann, *Die Entwickelung der Schrift*.

Hindoo thinks it desirable to propitiate such and such a rural divinity, the crony of the children of the soil. The mob of spirits and demons are incomparably less powerful than the august Siva or the sublime Vishnu, but infinitely nearer to mortals; it is simply common-sense to treat them with respect.

Thus a Brahmin woman sees her children die one after another. Why? No one knows. Perhaps the fault lies with some Koregar, some Birhor who has cast an evil eye upon them, or with some demon in the neighbourhood. The poor mother gives birth to another little one. What shall she do to keep it alive? This "well-born" woman, proud of her lineage, who in ordinary times would not touch a female Koregar with a pair of pincers, respectfully entreats such an one to visit her, begs her to take her into her good graces, presses her to accept rice, oil, some pieces of money, finally holds out her nursling to her, that she may take it in her arms and lay it to her breast. The savage allows herself to be propitiated, takes off one of her iron bangles and passes it over the baby's wrist and exclaims in a clear loud voice: "Child, thou shalt be called Koregar!" She suckles the innocent, examines it carefully and returns it to its mother. By a feigned adoption, by milk, by name, she has made the Brahmin infant her own, has incorporated it into her tribe and placed it under the protection of the Koregarian divinities.

Take another example. A poor devil of a Hindoo cannot cure himself of an illness, or considers that he is pursued by ill-luck and mischance. As a remedy, he fills a jar with oil, throws some of his hair and toe-parings into it, and gazes long upon his own image reflected in the liquid.[1] He carries this oil or *ghi* to a savage, who will drink it up to the last drop and be rewarded for his trouble. This operation, distinctly connected with our holy mystery of the Eucharist, brings about a transfer of substance, transmutes the Hindoo

[1] Walhouse, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute.*

into Koregar, the Koregar into Hindoo. By the infusion of hair and nail parings, by the reflected face, the oil becomes saturated with vital energy, impregnated with a soul, which passes into another body, another blood. Henceforth the Koregar will be surety for a Brahmin; another self, going bail for him to the demons of Koregaria.

Thanks to these superstitions, the Christian missionaries have had the joy of seeing Christ triumph over all rival gods and *bongas*, who frankly owned that they could do nothing against the men from Europe, the English guns depriving them of their best faculties. To rid themselves of the sorcerers, whom they had always found troublesome, a number of individuals besought holy baptism, and were converted to Jesus, though they dared not pray to Him in their own tongue. It is a repetition of the miracle performed by Moses before Pharaoh, the rods cast down by the magicians were transformed into serpents, but the rod of Jehovah became a dragon swallowing up all the vipers and lesser serpents.[1]

But do not let us insist upon the exceptional sides of the situation; it is incontestable that the Brahmins had so far enlarged and developed their superiority that they might well believe it eternal. The gulf, they said, was impassable, were it only on account of the impossibility that the Soudra breed, fed on inferior diet, should ever equal the race so carefully nourished and fashioned by a choice regimen. According to the theory they had circulated, caste was not merely an external fact, but an expression of temperament, of difference of nature. Aided by severe and rigorously enforced legislation, the system has certainly contributed to the formation of distinct types; that which at the beginning was but a slightly marked advantage, became in the long run an obvious disproportion, affecting flesh, muscles, and even the bones of the skeleton.

It is astonishing not to find these ethnical peculiarities,

[1] Grundemann, *Kleine Missions Bibliothek.*

which we state and describe without attempting to underrate them, more unalterably persistent. Thus it has often been observed that the Moondahs seem to share with the chameleon the faculty of taking the colour of their surroundings, and in mixed villages their complexion almost blends with that of the Hindoos. Ooraon women grow pale when they have spent a short time as servants in European households.[1] As regions grow more civilised, the type improves and becomes finer; the figure, it is true, long remains small, but the features are modified, and as these are folk of a jovial temper, the face soon assumes a pleasant expression. The missionaries, who are competent judges in this case, have noticed more than once how more regular feeding, more healthy abodes, and moderate and continuous work, quickly add beauty to body and facial expression; the children especially improve in appearance. It is for physiologists to pronounce upon the question.

Neither has the enforced ignorance, in which these aborigines have so long stagnated, produced the disastrous effect hoped for by their enemies. The lowest castes of all are, it is true, the most miserable of hordes; these are defective and brutalised, but the greater number do not appear to have deteriorated at bottom. Their intelligence, though limited and restricted to a small number of objects, remains healthy and susceptible of development. The Hindoo may be compared to a fruit tree cared for by the horticulturist, slowly developed and ennobled throughout long generations. Meanwhile, the wild stocks belonging to the same family are growing in the forest, yielding only sour and stringy fruit, but the roots are vigorous, the wood young, a little good grafting will be enough to transform the produce. Thus the Kolhs and Khonds. Superior classes, civilised nations, are prone to fall asleep in luxury, to slide into immorality, artificiality, convention, into Byzantianism in all its forms, into childish and vain senility. But so-called inferior classes,

[1] *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1874.

or uncultivated nations, are constrained by the exigencies of existence always to act, always to work, and in consequence to keep within the limits of reality and a certain common-sense. The missionaries declare that the young folks in their schools appear accessible to instruction, provided they are managed in the right way, and they suggest that two or three generations will put them on a level with Brahmin children.

I do not pretend to decide the question; it is enough to have drawn attention to its conditions. A certain scientific school has been over hasty in proclaiming types to be immutable, when their persistence might very well be merely caused by the relative fixity of their surroundings. General conditions of nourishment, climate, and habitat, so far from being primordial, are merely contingent and accidental, and they easily vary. Types are represented as if they were cast in bronze; are they not rather an accommodating mask, which adapts itself to plastic flesh and a relatively flexible skeleton?

But enough of theories, enough of hypotheses; let us return to the ground of ascertained fact.

If moral qualities really have the advantage over instruction, and over intellectual faculties, our barbarous Khonds are, in fact, highly superior to their civilised neighbours. Veracious and sincere, they disdain to escape a peril or gain an advantage at the price of a lie, or even a voluntary inexactitude. How often have English judges regretfully condemned worthy fellows to execution when there was no evidence against them but their own! They had denounced and given themselves up, and told the facts with absolute frankness, with scrupulous exactitude, considering themselves bound in honour to be silent upon nothing which might be prejudicial to them. What a contrast to the Bengalese, those incomparable knaves, those artists in dissimulation! It was one of the rare errors of J. Stuart Mill[1] to assert that

[1] *Essays*, 51.

uncivilised men take pleasure in lying, and seem incapable of speaking the truth. Most assuredly we do not mean to deny that true civilisation develops side by side with sincerity and justice; but the great philosopher would have expressed himself otherwise if a sojourn in the Indies had brought him in contact with Gonds and Khonds, with Malers, Birhors, Sonthals, and others, who hold truth sacred, and contract no engagement that they do not fulfil. There is no graver offence than to suspect their word; it is an insult which they wipe out with blood, and if they cannot slay the offender, they kill themselves. These Soorahs, these Poulayers breathe out candour. Those who treat them as "riff-raff and filth" say that they are incapable of imagining anything, incapable of inventing anything whatever beyond exact reality.[1]

Before the encroachments of civilisation, before they had undergone the English conquest, these savages were distinguished by a manly pride, by a joyous independence, rendering account to no one of their sayings and doings, paying dues to neither chief, nor government, nor landlord; each enjoyed full possession of himself, his house, and his field. Their independence was complete within and without. None had conquered them; for twenty centuries their tribefolk had never bowed the head before a stranger,—a noble pride, which might be read in their attitude and in their physiognomy. They avoided every obsequious word, every courtesy which might seem humiliating; for greeting they confined themselves to lifting the hand. The younger said, "I go about my business." "Go," returned the elder.

Their mutual affection is still the pleasantest trait in their character. The civilised peoples of the plain make a pastime of lawsuits; they hale one another before the tribunals on the most frivolous pretexts. In their judicial duels, they vie with one another in treachery and lies. But amongst the Kolhs and Khonds manners are different. Quarrels are rare between man and man, still rarer between man and

[1] Shortt, *Hill Ranges.*

woman. The husband who should take upon himself to blame his better half before the world, to threaten, to say nothing of insulting her, would raise censure, would excite the general indignation. It would take less than this to make the wife destroy herself; too often a discreet reproach has been enough to provoke poisoning; more than one has hanged herself for an ironical word, a compliment taken the wrong way. They imagine that the soul of the suicide returns to torment the offender; an idea current throughout India and the extreme East, and which has certainly inspired the Japanese in their well-known practice of *harakiri*.

Dalton says that these savage women win hearts by their frank and open manners and naïve gaiety. Mixing freely from earliest childhood with the other sex, they have none of the prudery of Hindoos and Mussulmans, who have been brought up in strict seclusion; a prudery which at moments gives place to unclean talk, and is full of suggested obscenities. On the other hand, the modest grace of young Hos or Moondah maidens and the little girls of the Larkas is a subject of praise. Patience! Civilisation will soon cure them of this barbarism, will correct their ignorance.

Until the second half of the present century the Khonds abominated commerce of all sorts, would not use money or any sort of currency, rejected shells as a medium of exchange. Instead of measuring the value of things in kind, they computed them by "lives," even inanimate objects, even hatchets, rice, meal.

No people push the religion of hospitality so far. On this head we must go back to the Bedouins, the Arabs of the desert, to find a comparison. There is not an honour they do not pay to a guest, not a kindness they do not show him; they set his life above their life, and his honour above their honour. "A guest before a friend, before even a child!" says one of their proverbs. Directly a stranger appears, however wretched he be, the heads of the family come to greet him, offering him food and lodging; he may

abide as long as seems good to him; never has an invited guest been sent away, never has he been made to feel that his presence was a constraint. They extend their hospitality even to the Dombangous, the low castes and decayed populations surrounding them; they treat them kindly, seat them at their feasts, defend them against every one, and protect them as if they belonged to their community.

"They have extended their hospitality to whole tribes. At a certain festivity it happened that a quarrel arose, and after a bloody affray, a clan was cut to pieces and put to flight. Pursued lance in hand, driven out of their hamlets, without a refuge, ousted from their heritage, the fugitives went and knocked at the doors that had been their own, and appealed to those who had fallen out with them :—

"'We are despoiled of everything. Be so good as to grant us hospitality.'

"'Enter and welcome!'

"And now all began to live together under the same roof; day after day, week after week, month after month, the conquered receiving food, drink, clothing, service, from their conquerors. This lasted a whole year. Finally the entertainers, unable to manage any longer, entered upon negotiations. 'Would you like to have back your houses? your fields? Would you be good enough to restore us your friendship?'"[1]

The asylum granted to enemies is not refused to criminals; and, what is saying a great deal, the murderer has sought and found refuge with the father of the man he has slain. They give this heroic hospitality even when they know that it will be fatal to their country. For example, in the great war of 1835 which put an end to their independence, the East India Company demanded fugitives whom the natives refused to give up.

"But reflect!' You have hitherto been our friends. Do not force us to show that we are the stronger. Your fields

[1] Macpherson.

will be laid waste, your burghs burnt, your warriors shot down. And if it comes to this, hard will be the conditions we shall impose upon the survivors."

"It shall not be said that a Khond has forfeited his honour, and delivered up the unfortunate who have come to entreat him."

They came to blows over it. The barbarians—they were barbarians—defended themselves with a bravery the English could not too much admire. In more than one encounter they were killed down to the last man. Finally, the Hindoo fugitives were given up, but by Hindoos, the Khonds remained unshaken in their proud and generous loyalty.

"During a campaign of two months, they showed," says Hunter, "unconquerable energy. Decimated at once by sword, pestilence, and famine, not one was to be found whose devotion to the public cause was weakened. And when the patriarchs, betrayed and given up, again by Hindoos, were condemned to death, with what admirable courage, with what touching resignation, with what simple dignity, did they submit to an ignominious death before their plundered dwellings!"

Such were the savages who have been painted in the blackest colours. In 1820, when he invaded Colehan with his troops, Major Roughsedge expected to find jungles; he debouched upon an open, slightly undulating country, carefully cultivated. The villages were sheltered by tamarinds and mango trees; the cottages were hidden beneath the foliage of pumpkins and cucumbers.

Our autochthons care very little about costume; a handkerchief, an old rag, any wretched strip of stuff, a narrow waist band seems to them sufficient; the women are content with a scarf, which they wind once or twice round their body or shoulders, and which falls over their breast. What is economised in clothing is expended upon ornamentation. They are circumspect in their tattooing. It consists of

coloured dots and lines on the forehead, nose, and chin, or on the arms. They wear flowers in their hair, necklaces, bracelets, anklets, coloured beads, teeth and shells; also brass and iron rings, especially the latter, these being the only sorts that Manu has allowed. Kolh and Khond women have profited by and even abused the permission. They vie with those of Guinea and Ashantee, and announce their approach from afar with a clank of chains and jingle of iron heavier than a convict's shot. The Pandjas, men and women, load themselves with from sixteen to twenty pounds of copper, and it is stated that in several districts the fair ones actually stagger beneath their ironmongery. Captain Sherwin had one day the curiosity to weigh the gewgaws and trumpery with which a Sonthal damsel had decked out her person; the scales notified thirty-four pounds! The Juangas who, like so many others, held tattooing the lightest, most economical, and even most elegant of costumes, and regarded it as a better preservative against rheumatism than a flannel vest, these Juangas retained until lately the apron of leaves to which Eve has given her name. The Curumbas of Malabar, the Dchantchous of Masulipatam, and the Weddas of Ceylon have done the same.[1] This shocked the ladies at Calcutta. They represented that Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria could not tolerate some of her subjects wearing nothing but a bead waistband, *plus* a leafy bough before and behind. The Viceroy of India decreed that the scandal should cease; Christianity and civilisation suppressed the innocent nudity of the Orissa jungles. The story is worth telling.

In 1871, a company, in panoply of war, took up its position and called the whole tribe to order. Nineteen individuals filed before the captain's platform and fell on their knees. The drums beat—one, two, three, four: right about face; and then four corporals and two sergeants proceeded—still in the name of her chaste Majesty—to perform

[1] Samuelles, *Journal of the Asiatic Society.*

the toilet of the fair sex. The first stamped the kneeling woman, marking her brow with a red spot, to teach her the first lessons of modesty. She rose, and stepped forward to where stripes number two waited to place a hand upon her shoulder, and tear off the foliage in front—let us bow before the virtuous sovereign who presides at the Drawing-Rooms at Buckingham Palace! The third Tommy Atkins relieved the savage of the foliage behind, and all the greenery was thrown into a fire lighted for the purpose. The fourth soldier put a petticoat upon the poor woman; the fifth strapped it round her waist, and the sixth saw her out of the door. A child of nature she came in, a civilised woman she went out, having laid aside savagery, and being clothed in Manchester cotton.

It is only the simple who say, "The habit does not make the monk." Our Khonds are a case in point. Whilst they believed in false gods they were vain of their hair, which they gathered up into a topknot; but since they have embraced the only true religion, the missionaries have cut off these crests as a sign that they have cast away the old Adam and are participators in the celestial inheritance.[1] There has been no need to call in the intervention of bayonets to make the Hos of Singbhoum spontaneously renounce the ancient fashion, for they have discovered that a piece of Madras muslin is more pliable, more decorative, and above all, more gaudy, than the collection of branches in which they formerly trussed themselves up for the frolicsome dance called the *Cock and Hens*. But the ancient costume had its advantages; there were moments when they regretted it. Fluctuation in the market having raised the price of woven and fancy articles, the fair ones plainly told the importers that if they did not return to the first prices, they themselves should go back to the old fashion, and as they were known to be women of their word, they carried their point.

[1] Grundemann, *Kleine Missions Bibliothek.*

The cabins are always covered with thatch; and, indeed, the code of Manu does not permit any other roofing. They are frequently in the shape of a bee-hive. The walls consist of a wooden framework, coated with mud, and are of the most primitive construction. The dwelling is an immediate and exact indication of the civilisation of any people, and of the comfort they have attained. Judged by this criterion, the Mags of Bengal should not be ranked high upon the social ladder, although they perch in a sort of fowl house of one or two stories, formed by bamboos fastened to stakes; on the ground floor reside the domestic pigs. Neither would the Pandjas of Djeypour shine, for they enclose with clay-encrusted sticks lairs, which they enter by crawling and wriggling. The space within is too narrow for even a short man to lie at full length, or to stand upright, the hovel being scarcely more than three feet high, as we are told. Father and mother, children and adults, pack themselves in, and curl themselves up, stewing in this stove and giving forth emanations which would terrify us, but which would not trouble Chinese in the least—if it be true that they assemble by the dozen in a room twenty feet square, to eat, drink, work, and sleep. Neither would the Juangas distinguish themselves by the sumptuousness of their abodes—these Juangas, who quite recently used nothing but flint for weapons and tools, and had no word for iron or metal. The Juangas, or "leaf-wearers," covered their huts, too, with branches. Each hut occupies a superficial area which, it is asserted, does not exceed seven square yards: our farmers would consider it a middling dog-kennel, an inadequate pig-sty. Yet it is divided into two compartments—a larder, which the ancients would have called the *penum* of the Lares, and a dormitory, where babies and girls sleep under their parents' eyes. As for the boys, they sleep elsewhere. Juangas, Gonds, Ooraons, Koukis, Nagas, a considerable number of the aborigines who dwell between the Vindhyas and Mounts Garo and Khassia, erect barracks,

which we will call "boy-houses."[1] There dwell the *ephebi* who are serving their apprenticeship to manhood; there dwell, also, all the unmarried adults. It is the finest, the one spacious building in the village, the palladium and sanctuary of the tribe. Drums, gongs, and tomtoms, relics of ancestors, costly weapons, trophies of the chase, are kept there; and it is also the Prytaneum where foreigners and all guests are treated with the generous hospitality which distinguishes peoples that are poor.

As for the girls, they generally rest beneath the very eyes of their parents, for they are a productive property which may be sold for a good price, if it does not invite robbers, and run away with them. Girls are also sent to lodge with widows. The Khonds, Malers, and Koupouirs have "girl-houses,"[2] or—to employ a term borrowed from the phallanstery of Fourier,—*vestalia*, sometimes next to the boy-house; more often each establishment occupies one extremity of the village. A virago, an intrepid and sturdy duenna, marches at the head of the feminine battalion, armed with a long switch, to chase away the boys and keep them at a distance. Similar institutions are to be found amongst the Herrnhuters of Germany, and in certain religious communities in America. The young people pay each other visits, undertake expeditions, indulge in festivities and feasts, dance, make gallant speeches—and await marriage.

Being unable to treat every subject exhaustively, we shall be brief on the head of communal institutions, interesting as it would be to study them in their primitive simplicity.

The indigenous tribes have given themselves a government that might with equal right be classed as authoritative or democratic. There is no rigorous demarcation between the power of the chief and that of the people:

[1] Called *dhangar basa, djirgal, dchom herpa, doum couria, mandar ghar.*
[2] *Dhangaim Casa.*

the people are confused with the chief and the chief with the people. Such and such a chief bears himself as an autocrat, as *Rey netto;* such another as the mere executor of the public will; one assumes the attitude of a tyrant, another of an enlightened despot, this one of a constitutional monarch, that of king of Yvetot.[1] But, however this may be, the community is greatly respected by its chief where it is small, and all the more because it is small. This is explicable. In hordes composed of from ten to a hundred families, the person of each adult is of consequence, each male is in himself a perceptible fraction of the public; neither his voice nor his arms can be set at naught; his opinion, his desires, his sentiments, will always be taken into consideration in the counsels of the chief, the deliberations of the senate, and of the popular assembly. But what is the weight, what can be the weight, of a human monad in a modern nation, in those monster states composed of ten, twenty, thirty, fifty, or a hundred millions of souls? The individual, absorbed in the mass, is no longer anything but a grain of sand, a drop in a pool. That which is lost by particular individuals, is gained by the central power, whatever name be assigned to it,—monarch, protector, president, doge, stathoulder. The king or emperor alone is of actual account in his State; he is a real being, in face of subjects, whose value is merely abstract and conventional. The barbarous City, peopled with effective citizens, constitutes a living organism. Its mechanism, essentially composed of the people and their chief, is soon complicated by an intermediate factor, the Senate, which takes one or other in tow. The preference of this political organ is directed towards the chief, whom it sets to work to absorb, whilst waiting to fall upon the people. According to circumstances, the government is transformed into a military aristocracy, a feudal oligarchy, a magma of great copyholders, a syndicate of exploiters, with the public

[1] The lords of Yvetot, in *Seine Inferieure*, bore the title of king from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries.

fortune for their privilege. Let sorcerers, priests, and rain-makers come into the bargain, confounding temporal and spiritual, jumbling together the business of heaven and earth, and the little tribe will be convulsed with the same complications which disturb and trouble states that make a great figure upon the stage of the world.

Our Khonds were tending to group themselves as a nation; federations were already being constituted, and were composed of tribes beginning, as it were, to form joints and members,—tribes which contracted offensive and defensive alliances, and obeyed a supreme council, consisting of their respective chiefs. As soon as it begins to act, such a federation obliges its enemies and rivals to form an opposing combination of like nature. After valiant campaigns, after terrible battles, where gainers and losers alike cover themselves with glory, the conquered are made tributary, and to keep them in subjection, the victors remain under arms, close up their ranks, submit to the same discipline as during the war, and after a few generations, the national group has acquired consistence, and generally adopted monarchical forms.

In Khondia, the chief dwells in the centre of the village, in a cottage, shaded by a great cotton-tree planted by the priest. This tree is the aerial abode of the patron saint, the temple of the guardian divinity; its growth and vigour react upon the population of which it is a symbol. The aborigines are noted for the attachment they bear to the chief of their clan, whom they have no cause to dread, or to regard with jealousy. They have the patriarchal idea of power, as the upholder of justice, the defender of property, the arbiter of strife. Differences are brought before the Council of Notables, who pronounce judgment, and then eat of the good and drink of the best at the expense of the losing party. On the Cacique's death, they proclaim his successor; generally his eldest son, unless his brother or some other individual is considered more worthy. When rulers do not

show themselves wholly inadequate to their task, the people, who find no attraction in the unknown, and make the fewest innovations possible, keep willingly to the reigning family. The Khonds venerate the god Terminus. Each year, the clans assemble on a mountain, sprinkle the summit with blood, and implore the sun-god to keep them such as were their ancestors, entreating him to give them children just like their fathers. Such as they are, they think themselves perfect.

Several tribes have taken openly—honestly, I was going to say—to the profession of robbery; they make no secret of it; their men are brigands upon the highways, and plunder people with a good conscience.

"The country belonged to us; conquerors have despoiled us of it. Where is the harm of relieving them of a few trifles now? Whatever we do, we shall never get back our possessions!"

It is a curious circumstance that some of them enter the service as policemen and thief-takers, hiring themselves out to overlook the doings of their fathers, the comings and goings of their uncles, brothers, and cousins, upon the roads and along the fences; a duty they fulfil without weakness, and with irreproachable exactitude. Families disunite, the members take their chance, some as poachers, some in the profession of gamekeeper. As long as they gain their living, they do not imagine that there is any virtue in defending property or crime in attacking it; two barristers, one pleading for the widow, the other against the orphan, are not more good-natured about it. No business is foolish as long as a man can live thereby. No one blames them, in a land where the Brahmins declare all religions good as long as they are observed, and ordain that each man shall continue in the trade of his fathers, robbers and plunderers to begin with.[1]

Journal des Missions Evangeliques, 1838.

Whether he be custom-house officer or smuggler, the Kolarian does not fall far behind our frontier peasant, who would give political economy and all the economists, for a whiff of tobacco. It is jolly to be marauder and cheat when one is young and supple, bold and enterprising, in the hey-day of physical capacity; but when ripe age makes one less nimble and active, more circumspect and prudent, and when one knows from one's own practice the crafts and dodges of blockade runners, it is better to devote oneself to repression, to retire upon official functions. It is part of the ideal, that is to say, of the truly normal destiny of a brigand to end as a commissioner. The Arnautes, the Palikares, and the illustrious Vidocq, could bear witness to the same. They get their hand in at their own risk and peril, and when they are proficients, the administration engages them. It is amongst the Bhils and Poligars, Koukies and Paharias, that the English Government prefers to recruit its squadrons of police.[1]

The Bhils of the Vindhya Mountains, like the Maravers of the province of Madura in Tinnevelly, have entered upon a twofold line of business, as policemen and as vagrants; they disturb the highways, and keep the peace upon them. Joseph Prudhomme must have borrowed from them that famous sword, wherewith he defends French institutions, or, at need, destroys them. That Jean Hiroux must have come from their ranks, who snubbed an uncivil gendarme: "Hullo, cocked hat, respect Old Johnnie! How would the mounted police live, if it weren't for the gentlemen of the road?" Thus they are to be seen enrolling themselves amongst the urban police and rural guard, or putting a finger in the pie, as night watchmen, gaolers, informers, spies, and accusers. They furnish a Hindoo village with one of its principal functionaries, the *manker* or field keeper, who guarantees it against marauders, on consideration of the enjoyment of a communal field or of a subsidy deducted

[1] Rowney.

from the crops. In case of a robbery—bad years are a source of many depredations—it is for the *manker* to guess its author, and to persuade him to make restitution, or else to bring him to justice. It is the function of this functionary to be incorruptible, and to proceed with rigorously impartial justice against the defrauders, be they the members of his own family. Two brothers are fond of choosing the same field of operations; they pillage and filch in concert, are nimble in "getting in the swag," until some folks find it their interest to engage the services of the one to protect them against the attempts of the other.[1] The new rural guard becomes responsible, and if he is hindered from hunting down the delinquent himself, he will delegate the heavy part of the work to one of his bloodhounds. Hunters from father to son, they examine the scene of the offence, distinguish marks and signs imperceptible to others, and find the imprint of a suspicious foot. They measure this foot-mark[2] exactly, tracing it upon a stick, to which they refer in dubious cases. If the track leads to another village, the hunter who is following it apprises his colleague, and entrusts to him the marked bamboo, which often passes through several hands before the guilty person is discovered. The services of the tracker are specially required when it is necessary to find animals driven off and carried away by robbers. In open country and on good roads it would not be difficult to follow their traces; but what must be the perplexity at the gates of towns, and in thoroughfares trampled by flocks and herds! The last clearly defined footprint is covered over with a stone, and shown to the leading men of the place. These are interested in proving that the track does not stop amongst them; they help to resume the search at the other end of the village. Sagacious sleuth-hounds have ended by finding the object after having travelled from two to three hundred miles.[3]

[1] Elliot, Greenhorn. [2] *Khoj.*

[3] Elliot, *The Native Races of the North-Western Provinces of India.*

But if the traces are lost in forest or jungle, or if they are effaced in his own village, the *manker* is held responsible, and repays the damage from his own fees. He has a right to resign his functions at any time, and even to set up in business as the robber and spoiler of the property he was guarding the day before. Some amongst them supplement deficiencies in their salary by adding the profession of marauder to that of constable. For one twelve hours they protect property; and for another twelve go and forage in the neighbourhood.

Is this only a local peculiarity, an ethnical singularity? Do not these highly correct Bhils, these Maravers in a double line of business, show up the principle of authority, exhibit the machinery of judicial institutions in the making? Whereby we perceive them to be founded, not upon a sentiment of abstract morality, as professors teach, but upon interest. At a given moment, the great majority find it to their advantage to guarantee themselves against robbery and murder by paying a premium of insurance to those individuals who make brigandage a profession, worthy fellows desirous of coming to a good understanding with a kind public. Let us draw in rough outline a history of the *Social Contract*, more truthful than Rousseau's; let us reproduce in broad lines the establishment of political and civil administration.

A roistering blade, a fellow with a clear head and a heavy hand, espies a rock commanding a defile between two fertile valleys; there he takes up his position and fortifies it. This man in possession falls upon the passers by, assassinates some, pillages and despoils the greater number. Having the power, he has the right. The travellers who object to being maltreated remain at home, or go round another way. Being left to himself, the brigand reflects that unless he can make some arrangement, he must die of hunger. Let the pedestrians recognise his rights upon the highway, and they shall pass the dangerous spot on pay-

ment of a toll. The pact is concluded, and the lord grows rich.

But, lo and behold, another hero, finding the trade a goodly one, takes up his station on the rock opposite. He too slays and plunders, and establishes his rights. He thus curtails the perquisites of his colleague, who scowls and grumbles in his donjon, but remembers that the new-comer has a sturdy fist. Corsair against Corsair is not business. He resigns himself to what he cannot prevent, and enters into negotiations; the first was paid, something must be paid to the second; every one must live.

Thereupon another rogue turns up, and instals himself at another turn in the road; and he too announces, from the height of his watch-tower, that he shall levy his share. His pretensions clash with those of his seniors, who very plainly perceive that if three halfpence are to be demanded of a traveller who has only two to give, he will stay at home rather than imperil his person and baggage. Our economists fall, Dick Turpin fashion, upon the intruder, drag him forth, abuse him, force him to take himself off. Then they claim two half-farthings in addition, as a just reward for the trouble they have taken in chasing away the spoiler, a legitimate recompense for the pains they are taking to prevent his return. Henceforth these two gentlemen become richer and more powerful than ever, and entitle themselves "Masters of the Defiles," "Overseers of the National Highways," "Defenders of Industry," "Sponsors of Agriculture," all appellations repeated with delight by the simple people; for it pleases them to be imposed upon under the mask of protection and to pay a large tribute to well-bred highwaymen.

It is thus—how admirable is human ingenuity!—it is thus that brigandage becomes orderly, extends, develops, is transformed into the mechanism of public order. The institution of robbery, which is not at all what a vain folk have imagined, gives birth to property and the police. Political autho-

rity, which was quite recently given out to be an emanation of Divine Right, and a good gift of Providence, was constructed little by little by the care of licensed highwaymen, by the systematic efforts of brigands who were men of influence. The police were formed and educated by ruffians who prowled about the outskirts of the forest, armed with a knotted cudgel, and shouted to the trader, "Your money or your life!" Taxes were the subscription, the premium paid by the robbed to the robbers. Joyous and grateful, the plundered placed themselves behind the knights of the highway, and proclaimed them the supporters of order, of religion, of the family, of property, of morals; consecrated them a legitimate government. It was a touching contract!

The Khond population are exogamous; that is to say, only permit marriage between individuals of different clans. They prohibit as incestuous all unions between *co-gentes;* punish them with death, however distant may be the ramification, or even if one of the partners has merely entered the family by adoption. The Khond marriage, much studied by MacLennan, presents a well-preserved example of the official rape called by Manu "the custom of the Rakshasas," and defined as "the violent capture of a girl, who weeps, and cries for assistance." But these cries and tears are no longer anything but a comedy; after negotiations and long bargaining, the girl is given up in consideration of a heavy sum, which must be paid before the abduction, and she is always carried off after a banquet and in the midst of a dance. When the merry-making is at its height, the maternal uncles of the future partners (remember that according to primitive custom they are guardians of the children to the exclusion of the father)—the uncles take it in their heads to set, one his nephew and the other his niece, astride upon his neck; they prance about and paw the ground: "Don't forget that I am on horseback, gentlemen!" as the captain says in *Little Dr Faust.*

This gesticulation of carrying the girl astride upon the shoulders, so eminently symbolic of rape, is by no means of accidental or isolated occurrence. It has been ascertained to exist in various countries far distant from one another, and in particular amongst numerous African tribes. As if by a sudden caprice, the dancers change burdens, and he who has taken the young girl abruptly makes off. An uproar arises; those present divide into two camps; there is a perfect rain of fisticuffs, but the final blows will be dealt by the robber party. A priest, hired for the emergency, accompanies the ravishers, to avert evil spells from the road. He stretches a thread over the brooks crossed, a magic bridge intended for the guardian spirits who conduct the maiden as far as her new dwelling; without this precaution they would not know how to cross running water.[1] They will not bid her farewell for ever; from time to time they will recross the foot-bridges, will gaze upon the woman suckling her new-born infant on the threshold, will bestow a benediction upon her, for which she will show her gratitude by a few handfuls of rice; she can do no more, because her worship belongs to the Penates of the man who has seized her person; her adoration is now addressed to the Lares of the clan which has ravished her.

Amongst the Kolhs of Chota Nagpore the feigned abduction is a very tame affair. The daughter-in-law's female friends throw clods at assailants, who fling them jests, provocations, and ironical remarks in return; the contest ends in fits of laughter. The girl, seeing herself so ill defended, makes no lengthy resistance, yields after a slight display of violence, ends by smiling upon the victors, and the whole assemblage goes to enjoy a fraternal bath in the

[1] Lewin, *Hill Tracts*. Same belief amongst the Karens and many peasants in Europe. Amongst the Mosquitos of Central America the dead man who wishes to remain in connection with his people asks that a thread may be stretched from his tomb to the house, over the marshes and water courses, ravines, and precipices.—Hellwald, *Naturgeschichte des Menschen*.

neighbouring stream. The young man takes a pitcher, left there for the purpose, and conceals it in the reeds: "Seek, my beauty, seek!" She does not fail to discover it, and thereupon hides it in her turn. "Find, fair youth, find!" He takes care not to seem more awkward than need be, and places the full pitcher upon the damsel's head, making as if he pushed her somewhat roughly out of the brook; then, of set purpose, he steps upon her heel and seizes her by the arm; but his mien soon softens, and the rough handling becomes a caress. As she trots along, he lets fly an arrow between the crock and the arm that holds it. "Go on without fear, my bow clears the road for thee!" When she reaches the arrow, she daintily raises it between her great and second toes, and offers it with a low curtsey to her master and protector, who thanks her with a nod.[1] The rape has become an idyll.

Neither do the Gonds fly into a passion over such affairs. When the girl is carried off, her brothers and cousins pretend not to notice it, but her sisters and companions advance boldly to the attack, crying that they will make the saucy fellows let her go. Little French girls do much the same:

"*Nous etions trois filles,*
Filles à marier:
Nous nous en allâmes
Dans un pré danser.
Dans le pré, mes compagnes,
Quil fait bon danser!

Nous nous en allames
Dans un pré danser;
Nous fîmes rencentre
D'un joli berger.

Il prit la plus jeune,
Voulut l'embrasser;
Nous nous mîmes toutes
A l'en-empêcher . . .

[1] Dalton.

"We were three girls,
Girls to be married;
We ran away
Into a meadow to dance.
In the meadow, my companions,
How good it is to dance!

We ran away
Into a meadow to dance;
We fell in with
A pretty shepherd.

He took the youngest,
Would have embraced her;
We all set ourselves
To stop him! . . ."

But see these brigands, less timid than the little shepherd in the song, make as if to spring upon the kind friends themselves; and that they also may not be made prisoners, these beat a retreat.

Amongst the Ooraons, the combat ends as it began, in a dance. After exchanging their wards a-pick-a-back, the uncles begin a quarrel, which goes off into a caper, and ends by a prance of reconciliation. The young people, who have been well rubbed with oil, are presented with the emblem of conjugal love, a lighted lamp, the flame of which must be fed by the husband. Here too the youth presses his toe upon the bride's heel; she throws herself backward, her head upon her lover's shoulder; he marks her brow with a red stain from a drop of his blood, a solemn act made public by a discharge of fire-arms. The group is hidden by extended draperies, whilst the warriors around clash their spears, on the assumption that they will thus put to flight the demons who prowl about seeking whom they may devour. The father and mother-in-law present the "cup of love," filled with fermented liquor; the bride and bridegroom twirl their fingers in it, and drink each their half. These three symbols —the cup of communion, the crimson mark, the conquering toe—are to be found in every region of India; and if it were

not needful to be brief, I might go on to draw attention to more than one similar feature in the matrimonial rites of our own country. When there is no line of demarcation between the ideas, ought we to be surprised that the symbols recur?

Abductions may be other than fictitious, if skinflint relatives are determined to demand a price for their article which the fanciers declare excessive. At Singbhoum market well-armed youths fall upon a maiden,—"My beauty, you must follow us!" Willy nilly, they drag her away at the top of their speed, and gain the open. The public abstain from all forcible intervention, but they applaud if the lad and lass are well-matched and well-favoured. Holding the coveted object in pledge—*beati possidentes*—the ravishers re-open negotiations on a fresh basis, and the relations are obliged to lower their terms.

Three days after her abduction, the Sabine flees the conjugal roof and takes refuge with the kinsfolk who have sold her. The husband comes to claim his property; the wife screams and weeps, slaps, bites, scratches, and finally follows this brigand of a man,—reluctantly, be it understood, for the monster has brought with him a noisy band, who give themselves the most threatening airs. One must give in, for there is no knowing to what extremities these scamps might proceed if they were put to it. In a word, all the proprieties have been observed; the young wife has made a display of filial sentiment, the young husband has shown himself enamoured of his conquest, sullen and ill-subdued as she seems.

A Salic law, as just and intelligent as that which was formerly the rule in the fair kingdom of France, forbade a Khond woman to retain any possessions of her own, on the principle, "Unfit to defend, unfit to possess." Being foreclosed of property, and having consequently forfeited all rights, the woman did not even dispose of her person, since she had been captured and carried off by force. But it

matters little if property be denied to one who can take possession of the property-owner. The daughter of Eve has not failed to do this, and, despite the brutal toe that has bruised her heel, she is anything but a slave. We find her arbitress of disputes, justice of the peace, a councillor always listened to in public and private affairs, and even admitted to discuss, though not to vote, at the council of the tribe.[1] She is to be seen in constant communication with the wives of rajahs, negotiating public interests with them. And the rajahs, in their turn, when they wish to gain alliances or enlist auxiliaries, despatch female envoys, fair ambassadresses, to whom the patriarchs and warriors listen with pleasure. A foe would have found them unmanageable, but they lay down their arms before beauty.

It is exogamy at its best which gives her lofty position of conciliatress to the Khond woman. Her father and her father-in-law may meet on a field of battle, her brothers and brothers-in-law may perhaps exchange blows with their hatchets, but she will always be allowed to dress the wounds of him who has been struck down, to kiss the lips that are growing pale. She will be the first to suggest peace, the most ardent in recommending, the most skilful in concluding it.

This woman, who is bought for ready money, bartered for articles of furniture, ought to be a slave; she is a mistress. She has been sold dear, very dear; care will be taken that she does not deteriorate. As rape was transformed into purchase, the money question came to the front; consequently the personal convenience of the young man was subordinated to that of his kinsfolk, who made the bargain. Consulting their own preferences, they gave themselves a daughter-in-law quite at their own disposal, procured a knowing housekeeper who was strong to labour. To provide against any deception, they took her when she was from fourteen to sixteen years old, an age at which a girl in these

[1] Rowney.

regions is already formed in person and character. And that the son might not put in a claim to consult his own inclinations, they married him at ten or twelve. Daddy took him a-pick-a-back. "Gee, cock-horse! gee, gee, cock-horse! we are going to run off with a young lady! Gee, cock-horse! And we will give her to Toto! Gee, cock horse! gee up, cock-horse!" After the kidnapping comedy had been brought to a happy end, the little man waited for the consummation of the marriage, which was always delayed by papa for reasons best known to himself. We are not, however, told that the Khond father does exactly the same as the Reddies of Tinnevelly, the Vellalah of Coimbatore, and so many Russian Moujiks, who, when they have married a big girl to one of their lads, take the trouble to accustom her to the yoke, to instruct her in conjugal physiology whilst she is waiting for her official espousals, and carrying it with a high hand over her youthful mate. On the nuptial day, the wife and several biggish children will be handed over to the husband.[1] During the years of apprenticeship, a Khond becomes accustomed to act under the direction of the young woman who is his lawful wife, and at the same time his intended; and when at length he has the right to speak as a master, is it likely that he will be able to recover the start these few years have given her?

So little is the wife treated as a slave, that after six months of co-habitation she has a recognised right to leave a husband in the lurch who has not succeeded in making himself agreeable. If the whim seizes her, she departs, to return no more. In some places she is allowed to go whether she is with child by her husband or not; she takes her little children, leaving the husband to claim them when they are older. Elsewhere she is less kindly treated; she cannot go if she is pregnant, or before she has weaned her suckling; but if she has remained childless, no difficulties are raised. In any case the father of the discontented woman is obliged to refund,

[1] Shortt, *Nilgherry Tribes*,

down to the last halfpenny, whatever was paid by the divorced husband. By the fact of re-instating herself beneath the paternal roof, the young person declares that she has resumed her old condition of maidenhood. But if she intends to marry again, there is no need that she should be kidnapped. Amongst a hundred adult individuals there are, on an average, seventy-five bachelors, all bound to receive her with open arms, should she demand hospitality. If the man she picks out evades her advances, the whole clan answers for him, and declares itself the fair one's host, gives her good lodging, and the rest, until she has all she desires. A relic of polyandry.

A self-respecting Khond wife has, in the course of her conjugal career, exercised her right to change three, four, or five times. But, by a rare anomaly, the like is not admissible for her husband. If he wishes to associate with a concubine, let him obtain the consent of his lawful wife. Not being able to plead incompatibility of temper, like his companion, he can only get a divorce in the case of notorious adultery, flagrant or prolonged misconduct on the part of his lady, whom opinion is far from regarding with asperity for a few lapses from her marriage contract. Should he surprise her in the act of criminal conversation, all violence is forbidden him. It would be shameful if he struck his wife, was uncivil to her, or even insulted her lover. If he is very harsh, he will exclude the faithless one from his hearth for a day or two, until the other has paid his fine—a pig, and twelve head of cattle, a fixed price well known beforehand. After it has been paid, a husband who did not consider himself indemnified would be thought touchy and awkward to live with. In some neighbourhoods, however, honour demands that, without waiting for the payment of damages, the lover and husband shall catch each other by the hair and shake each other briskly, before an impartial assembly who will applaud the best throws. On these occasions, all weapons but natural ones are prohibited; between brothers, fellow-citizens, and co-gentes, fisticuffs and kicking ought to suffice.

Besides, there has been no adultery properly so-called; one cousin has taken a place belonging to another, but it has been all in the family. After the duel, Paris and Menelaus pay each other reciprocal compliments, and sit down to a banquet to which Fair Helen has devoted her attention. The same custom formerly existed in Mingrelia,[1] where the pig paid as a fine also defrayed the expenses of the reconciliation. A Khond wife is held in more consideration if this incident is renewed from time to time; each gallant brought to justice is a title of honour. Matrons instruct young women in the way they should go, throwing their heads up and saying, "Why, my little prude, at your age I had made such and such an one pay the fine." Though a Khond is so discreet in her bearing and so reserved in her conversation that she does not venture to say "my husband," but employs the circumlocution "the father of my children," she has no scruple about fathering a few extra children on the aforesaid. It is a trifle in Khondia, where paternal affiliation has still to be consolidated. In such matters two or three centuries go for little, and time rolls a lazy length along. The individual household is not here entrenched behind the walls of private life, the male community has not yet entirely relinquished its sovereign rights to the person of every woman and to her progeny. These matrimonial institutions are still polyandous at bottom, a result of the scarcity of wives, which itsel arises from the scarcity of provisions.

When the bonds of individual marriage are so slack, we must not call these worthy peasants to strict account for the practices they have contrived for the sake of securing the prosperity of their fields, a good crop of corn, and the garnering of a rich harvest. Ceres, the maker of laws, Demeter, who has moralised our race, are frequently extolled; so be it: but, all the same, the "Mysteries of the good Goddess," everywhere, even in the New World,[2] began as orgies one

[1] Chardin, R. P. Zampi.

[2] The *Harvest Festival* amongst the Muyscas, &c., for example.

can hardly describe. Our Khonds do not go so far as the Thotigars of Southern India, who insist that their wives give themselves to all comers, that the earth, following this good example, may cause the seed deposited in its bosom to germinate. At sowing time, festivities take place which recall those of the Babylonian Mylitta, where the daughters of Israel honoured Astarte by prostituting themselves upon the corn-floors to thresh the wheat.[1] The Thotigars set up, here a tent, and there a straw shanty, beside the highroad. These they strew with fern, and stock with provisions. The husbands install their better halves under these shelters, and go themselves to entice the passers-by, pressing their invitations when necessary. "Procure the public good; ensure an abundance of bread!" It is useless to argue about matters of belief!

Let us add that adultery (but ought so big a word to be used of such fragile marriages?)—adultery is a matter of course when a tiger-killer, to whom almost divine honours are paid, presents himself. On his return from his lucky hunting expedition, he is surrounded by all the women of the township and locality, dancing and singing,

"He who has slain the tiger shall have the fairest, the fairest!"

And how many fancy themselves the fairest on such an occasion! What family will not be happy and proud to possess an offshoot sprung from a tiger-killer!

As we sell our daughters, let us sell them dear, say the producers. Let us prove the nobility and distinction of our progeny by putting a high price upon it. Singbhoum fixes the average market price of a young lady of good family at forty head of cattle ready money. A fair exchange, take it or leave it. Our girl can wait; she is honest, and prefers celibacy to the dishonour of not being sold at her price. So much the worse for virgins left on the stalk and run to seed, and so much the worse for youths who are shy and

[1] Hosea ix.

lazy about rape. But whatever they may say, parents are not much pleased if their daughter does not find a purchaser; they grow angry when a robber, appropriating a high-priced maiden, makes as though he would pay for her with a cudgel. How is this inconvenience to be remedied?

To clear the market, and keep up prices at the same time, fathers of families bring about a scarcity of goods, by practising infanticide upon a large scale; they diminish the supply to increase the demand. These savages have their political economy lessons, after the manner of MacCulloch and Ricardo. But how troublesome this industry is! The article bought has legs, and demands that the buyer shall please her; the volatile creature remorselessly leaves the first husband in the lurch and runs to a second. The father-in-law will be sued for restitution. But he no longer has the sum, he has squandered it all, or in part. Doubtless the seller is armed with the right of recovery against his new son-in-law; but this latter, having the precious object already in possession, is in no hurry to give the money. However, he promises to comply, but at the moment when he is about to pay up, lo and behold the young woman—inconstant like so many others—is bewitched by a third—by a fourth, who knows? To make things worse, the husbands belong to different tribes, who may any moment come to a collision. One of these husbands on credit is killed in war (wars are frequent and murderous), and farewell to the money he owed! Though tribes are answerable for the debts contracted by their members, more than one has been ruined by means of a girl sold too advantageously. Certainly this trade is too risky; it would be better to give it up. These worthy girl-raisers are well aware that neighbouring peoples, who get rid of their feminine subjects at purely nominal prices, are saved all this inconvenience; a trifle bestowed, a trifle given in return. But the patriarchs would answer, "We are not the folk to barter our girls for a morsel of bread."

In consequence, certain aristocratic clans came to raise only males, and imported the necessary females; at most they allowed the eldest daughter to live, if there were a project of alliance with some lofty foreign house. Macpherson, passing through certain villages, saw numerous boys and few little girls or none; he estimated that on an average two-thirds or three-fourths of the feminine births were suppressed.

From time to time, however, the "ties of blood" made themselves felt. The unfortunate little wretches were not always immolated by preconcerted design; some chances of salvation were willingly left them, the responsibility of their death being thrown upon the gods. Priests or *djannis*, astrologers or *desauris*, drew the horoscope by means of a book. They threw the style, with which in writing they scratch the leaves of the palm; the passage it touched decided the life or death. Death? The parents take the innocent, paint it over with red and black stripes, thrust it into a large new pot, which they bung up, cover with flowers (our æsthetes make even assassination pretty), and carry in the direction of the wind indicated as threatening. When the pot is buried and a chicken bled over it, there is nothing more to say or do.

It has already been more than once remarked, feminine infanticide is more general amongst noble than amongst poor and wretched races. The Rajpoots also, an aristocratic and warlike people, who have several characteristics in common with the Khonds, grew weary of ruining themselves in wedding presents to their sisters or their daughters, to whom they sent magnificent dowries, even when they had been kidnapped.[1] They therefore conceived the notion of drowning the poor creatures in a bath of warm milk. They asked for milk; well, milk was given them. But warm milk, be it remarked; they would not have had the heart to asphyxiate them in liquid cold to the touch. Where do we not find a touch of sensibility?

[1] Elliot, *Races of the North-West Provinces of India.*

Let us silence the indignation excited by these unnatural acts. Primitive men have but insufficient sources of subsistence at their disposal, and do not suppose that the newborn have a soul worth speaking of, therefore they think little of procuring abortion, and of infanticide. And how many civilised people in India, China, and even elsewhere, regard the birth of a daughter as a misfortune! How many expose the baby, or let her die slowly of hunger! A doctrinaire sect has extolled the practice of Malthusianism, calling it an act of the "greatest domestic prudence." What absurd and cruel responses have been elicited by the social problem! Girls, whom it was difficult to marry, according to their own rank, caste, or fortune, have been given by Christian and Buddhist nations "to religion," have been got rid of by being cloistered in convents. But uncivilised peoples prefer to kill them at once; it is less hypocritical. And the Khonds might add, that the consumption of men by incessant warfare and often renewed strife must in some way be counterbalanced.

Infanticide apart, parents show tenderness and affection for their progeny. The young wife, anxious to be a mother (the mother of a boy, of course) entreats the blessing of various divinities upon her womb. If pregnancy is deferred, she makes pilgrimage to the conflux of two brooks or rivers, where she is sprinkled by a priest, pronouncing sacramental words the while. Long beforehand, she begins to be anxious about the name fate reserves for her child. This name will be that of one of the grand-parents, for ancestors make arrangements to be born again into the family. During harvest and other pressing labour, the mother fastens the nursling upon her back, and drags it along with her, adding this fatigue to that of the sickle. But has she really the simplicity to believe what is taught by the theologians and astrologers of the locality? That the Sun-God, having ascertained the disastrous effects produced by sexual passion, has commanded that the number of women be limited?

Has declared that to let them all live, would render peace and social order impossible? That morally and intellectually they are inferior to the lords and masters they, nevertheless, know so well how to manage? That by the woman, more subject to evil, sin entered into the world?

The souls of the departed are said to return into their families, where they are reborn generation after generation. But a soul is not definitely received until the "nomination," which takes place seven days after birth. If the child is given the name of Paul, rather than that of Peter, the ancestor Paul will renew his term of existence, and Peter must continue to wait patiently. If a little girl is in question, and she is put to death during the first week, the soul will understand, without further explanation, that her person is no longer desired by her family. She will go and take up her abode elsewhere, cause herself to be adopted by another tribe. Thus will the stock of feminine souls be diminished, to the advantage of the masculine element. In pursuance of this line of argument, some Chinese of Hekka and of Canton kill girls as soon as they are born, even cut off their noses and ears, or flay them, it is said, to dissuade them from being born again of the inferior sex. Certain madmen are also indignant with the mothers, whom they accuse of complicity with the wretched beings.[1]

In consequence of the suppression effected, the survivors are at a premium in the Khondian marriage market, and enjoy great consideration in public and private relations. It is stated (can this be true?) that they are more obstinate than their husbands in keeping up the cruel custom.

Our natives are addicted to the pleasures of the chase, as a relaxation after their agricultural labours; after handling mattock and plough, they sigh for the terrible excitement of war, for a violent shock to carry them beyond the habits of daily life. This need for emotion is at first satisfied by in-

[1] *China Review.*

toxication, by wild dances; but from time to time their temperament demands something more. They deem it indispensable to measure themselves occasionally against rivals of their own stature, for the sake of exhibiting valour and might, of giving new vigour to pride, and renovating the lustre of ancient glory. Slaughter between brothers is an instinct of the higher animals. Though inferior races are, for the most part, endowed with the capacity of being enormously prolific, they do not multiply beyond measure, because they are preyed upon by one another and by superior species. The latter would overflow, did they not compete with each other, did they not guard, with inflexible rigour and cruel severity, against rising above a certain level. At the beginning of its existence, the high-bred animal, being still weak, and exposed to a thousand perils, pays the tribute to morality exacted by growth, acclimatisation, and the diversity of its apprenticeship to life. To reach the age of an adult safe and sound, is in itself a glorious victory. It is a huge success to have surmounted thousands upon thousands of difficulties, every one of which might have been fatal; difficulties, patent and latent, direct and indirect, visible and invisible. After having triumphed over the whole world, so to speak, the greatest of all perils is reached; the struggle against equals, the fight against comrades, against the brother who is another self. These fledglings of the same brood have prospered. They are going to measure their strength in excellent conditions, the sturdiest will accomplish the grand physiological act, and perpetuate the species. "The strongest shall have the fairest." War is a primordial fact, an organic article of the charter granted by Nature to primitive populations. The struggle stirs the blood, rouses the dormant energies, and suppresses the weak, either by immediate death, or indirectly by hindering them from reproducing their own feebleness. Festivals and banquets are each and all the pretext for contests and fights. The males, being made of coarser clay than the females, seem to find no better

amusement than in setting upon one another with fists and feet, sticks and stones. At the beginning of this century, in several districts of Ireland, Wales, and Brittany, the adults still indulged themselves on Sunday afternoons with the satisfaction of getting drunk and then knocking each other about. At Velay, in Spanish Aragon, and many another province, it was a fine thing to unsheathe a knife, brandish it, and then wrapping up a part of the blade with a handkerchief: "O hey! O hey! Where is the lad who will taste my point? Two inches of steel? three inches, four inches? Who will have some of this toy? who will have some? Come on, all who hanker after it!"

The savage populations of India and Farther India have also their heroic conflicts. Once or twice a year the males assemble; to shake off their numbness, they seize each other by the hair, tug, and jostle each other in fine style; in this play they only use the weapons bestowed by Dame Nature, which are sometimes mortal. But our Khonds, passionately addicted to the profession of arms, consider this amusement coarse and undignified. "Hand play, villain's play." Let us hear their legend:—

"Formerly we did no better. As amongst monkeys, as amongst tigers and bears, teeth or claws were enough for us; our ancestors played also with pebbles and clubs. But the gods in their goodness gave us Iron as a gift. One of them gave himself to us, the Tiger God, Loha Pennou, Master of War, Genius of Destruction, who one day came forth out of the earth in the form of a stem of steel.

"At first, the Iron touched no living creature without suddenly killing it; but the ever merciful gods took away some of its poison, saying:—Iron, thou shalt kill, but not always! Amongst those whom thou hast bitten, all shall not die, some shall pine, others shall be healed.

"Ever formidable is the virtue of Iron. If a priest bury the knife of Great Tiger beneath a tree, the tree will wither, the tree will die. If he throw his knife into a river, the river will dry up.

"The thirsty God needs blood. His own priest is sacrificed to him after four years of faithful service. Loha needs much blood; therefore has he instituted war, and commanded that it should be the noblest of our occupations.

"War, everlasting war, is the health of the people. That war may be fed, God permits, God commands that it should be interrupted by truces, by armistices, during which we cultivate the soil and procreate children, who in their turn will fight and slay one another."

Each village, each group of hamlets, possesses a grove, which neither woman nor child may enter; it is sacred to the God of War, who presides over battles between Khonds and foreigners, but not over the quarrels that may break out between clans of the same tribe. Loha, God of Iron, is cooped up in an old knife. He is three-fourths sunk in the ground, but slowly emerges when battle is a-preparing, and re-enters the blade when enough blood has been shed. The priest watches the height of the knife, the movements of this delicate barometer, with an attentive eye; for should there be delay in satisfying the divinity, he would avenge himself by becoming a devouring tiger or devastating epidemic. On receiving a warning from the servant of the altar, the elders come together and deliberate according to rule. "Has Loha really awakened? Is it certain that he is unquiet? Is he angry? And against whom shall we fight?"

The warriors bring weapons and military gear before their Mars-Apollo, to whom they offer a chicken with rice, sprinkled with arrak,—a comfortable little mess, which the God consumes; afterwards the *djanni* apostrophises him:—

"O God, we have tarried in placing ourselves upon a war footing! Have we forgotten any of the precepts? Have we waited too long, thinking that our youth must have time to grow, that our people must be nourished?

"Howsoever it be, thy august will manifests itself by the depredations of the tiger, by fever and ophthalmia, by gnawing ulcers and fretting rheumatism.

"Lord, we obey!

"Behold our weapons! Already they are stout; make them sharp and piercing. Direct our arrows; direct the stones from our slings.

"Enlarge the wounds they will make in our enemies, and if those wounds close, may weakness and impotence remain! But may our own wounds heal as speedily as blood dries upon the earth!

"May the weapons of the foe be fragile as the dry fruit of the *karta* tree; but may our axes be powerful as the jaws of a hyena, crushing through the flesh and shattering the bones!

"May our men of low stature overthrow giants. Cause, O God, that in the battle our wives may be proud that they bring food to men brave as we! May foreign tribes, admiring our exploits, offer us their daughters! Aid us to pillage villages, to raid oxen, to steal tobacco! May copper vases fall to the share of our wives! Joyfully will they bear them to their kinsfolk!

"Succour us, O God, succour also our allies, in return for the many chickens, porkers, sheep, and oxen we have offered up to thee!

"What is our request? That thou shouldst lend a hand to the execution of the commands thou hast given; that thou shouldst protect us as thou hast protected the heroes, our ancestors.

"Grant, O God! grant, Loha, Warrior Deity, that in our hands the Iron may return to its primal virtue! Thanks to its edge, may we become rich! Being rich, we will enrich thee, O our guardian and friend!"

Thereupon the warriors take up their weapons, endowed with magic virtue by contact with the altar, and brandish them over their heads. Again the priest imposes silence, and recites the liturgy of Iron:—

"In the beginning, the God of Light created the mountains, created the rivers, created the brooks, created the plains, created the forests and rocks, created game, created

domestic animals. After these he created man, and after man Iron.

"But man was still ignorant of the virtues of Iron.

"A woman, Ambali Baylie was her name, lived with her sons, two warriors. . . . One day they came before her wounded, their breasts were bloody. She asked, 'What is the matter, children?' And the boys made answer, 'Amongst the folks down yonder they were amusing themselves with blades of sword-grass, and they tickled their sides.'

"The mother dressed the wounds, and said, 'Fie, sword-grass! Leave the sword-grass alone, my children.'

"Some days after, the sons came back again all bristling with thorny points; they were covered with them like a sheep with its wool. Again Ambali healed the scratches, and said, 'It is unseemly to fight thus. Go, seek iron in the country of the Hindoos, forge it into axes and arrow-points, bend the bamboo into a bow, deck your heads with feathers, make yourselves breast-plates of skins and cloth, and then go forth to battle.

"'Battle sharpens the wits and makes stout the heart. Therefrom will you gain woven stuffs, salt, and sugar, and you will learn to know other men and other manners.'

"Thus the sons and grandsons of Ambali went forth to battle, but scarcely any of them returned. The survivors came home, and said, 'Mother, we have obeyed thee; but how many are the dead! It is impossible to stand against the terrible edge of the Iron.'

"And Ambali Baylie answered, 'It is true that into the Iron no drop of pity entered. But you, go you heat it in the fire of the forge, beat it with a hammer, and amend the barbs of your arrows!'

"This they did, and henceforth has the Iron no longer caused every one whom it strikes to perish. Nevertheless, it defends the sacred boundaries, and guards our possessions and our rights."

After a pause, the priest shouts to one of the groups:—

"To arms! to arms! I go before! March!"

Guided by the man of God, a band pushes forward to the frontier of the tribe it has been resolved to attack. An arrow is cast over the border, and the men spring after it. The messengers cut a branch from a tree growing on the enemy's soil, and carry it away. Such symbols as these may be called universal, since they are to be found amongst populations so dissimilar as the Nagas, the Romans, and Moundroucous of South America.[1] On returning to the sanctuary, the djanni dresses this branch with skins and bits of stuff; he fastens weapons on the two twigs that do duty for arms; then he flings down before the altar the dummy, thus accoutred as a warrior, to represent the foe:

"O God of Light, and all other divinities, bear witness that we have fulfilled all the precepts ordained!

"Therefore, God of War, abstain from visiting us in the form of tigers, fevers, and other plagues!

"In all justice, victory is due to us.

"Listen, O Gods! We do not ask that we may be secured from death, but that we may not be disabled.

"Cover us with glory, O Gods, and forget not that we are the nephews of heroes, your illustrious friends!"

These preparations at an end, it remains to notify the declaration of war, for integrity demands that the foe shall have time to arm himself, to take all defensive measures, and to accomplish the ceremonies which win the favour of Immortals, and consequently success. Each side promises a human victim to Demeter, and to Mars-Apollo, copious draughts of the blood of goats and fowls.

The chief of the village despatches youthful messengers, who run to the places designated. Brandishing a bow and arrows, they make known to the men of the other tribe that they are awaited at sunrise at a certain spot. The challenged make answer by thanks and congratulations,

[1] Spix and Martius.

and reward the heralds as if they had been the bearers of good tidings.

On the appointed day, the warriors appear at the trysting-place in their finest gear, washed and perfumed as if for a bridal; their hair is braided, and the feathers stuck in the knot wave in the wind, lofty and proud as ever were the plumes upon a knight's helmet. The women come with pitchers of water and baskets of food, for the fray will be fierce, and it may last for several days. The old men, whom age no longer allows to enter the lists, take their places as spectators; having played their part in many such festivals, they counsel and encourage their sons and nephews. The signal for the fight is given by the aggressors, who throw a red cloth into the midst of the field; they are about to make a bloody mantle for the earth. The djanni clap their hands. One, two, three! Upon them merrily!

The battle is a series of single combats, interrupted by repose and repasts, and interspersed with challenges and dialogues, after the manner of Homer's heroes. The spectators enjoy the feats of arms; one would suppose it a gladiatorial exhibition; it is a game, but a terrible one. Blows rain down like hail; the warriors are so many wood-cutters working in a grove of men. Magnificent sweeps of the axe, delightful feints, graceful thrusts and parries, elegant strokes and fine returns! The women applaud—the women, whose presence is held to be indispensable. Wives, sisters, and mothers, wipe the sweat streaming from bloody brows, cool the thirsty lips, rub the weary limbs, soothe with caressing hands the breasts panting with exertion.

All fling themselves upon the first who falls lifeless, the first-fruits of the battle, to dip their axes in his blood; in a few moments his body is cut to pieces. He who is so lucky as to slay his opponent, without being wounded himself, cuts off the dead man's right arm, and carries it to the priest, that he may bestow it upon Loha. At evensong a little heap of arms is often to be seen upon the altar; thirty

men or so have perished on one side, a score on the other; more have been wounded. They do not always stop at this point; when things are done on a grand scale, they begin again on the morrow and following days, until one party is totally disabled.

Indeed, it is less a battle than a tournament, a joust within the lists. The Khonds are knights rather than soldiers; they are ignorant of tactics, disregard marches, counter-marches, and flank movements, and neither observe any sort of caution, nor spare themselves in any way; they slay one another like kinsfolk, rather rivals than foemen.

However, the most delightful things end by becoming wearisome, the most charming by lasting over long. The first to have enough of it are the women, who run the risk of losing, by each other's hands, both their own fathers and the fathers of their children. Being taken, as the law directs, from a clan other than that of their new family, more than one amongst them looks on at a duel between her husband and her brother, admiring both equally, trembling equally for the life of both. Like the Sabines of old, they will come between and reconcile them. They communicate freely with both camps, as do also the Katchou Nagas in the Assam Mountains. Whatever war the husbands of these latter may engage in, the women do not interrupt their calls or daily business. Those who look on at fathers and husbands, brother and friends of childhood, slaying one another, are recognised as neutral parties; it is not considered wrong that on the morrow of a battle they mingle tears and regrets. It is for them to interpose, to plan a peace together, and at an auspicious moment to bring a third tribe upon the scene, to intervene, and send heralds, who shout, "Enough! it is enough!"

Ordinarily answer is made: "We have not desired the war, it was Loha who insisted upon it; if he will that it continue, the arrows will fly in spite of us." "Doubtless," return the peacemakers, "but if Loha be satisfied, be ye

satisfied likewise. We go to consult him. Let either party send two men to be witnesses of his reply."

The djanni brings rice, and thrusts into it an arrow, taken from the temple of Apollo Loha. The arrow remains upright? Let the war run its course! The arrow bends to one side and falls? Let peace be concluded!

The belligerents, however, demand a fresh sign. Why not? The priest convokes the whole assembly before the altar, and calls upon the god:

"O Loha! thou decidest upon war. Why? We know not.

"Wouldest thou preserve the entirety of our valiance, which otherwise might have worstened in inaction? Wouldest thou hinder our enemies from becoming over strong? Wouldest thou withdraw us from sloth and indolence? Wouldest thou honour thy friends with a glorious death?

"Perchance the blacksmiths, weavers, and distillers have incited thee to send us forth to a war whence they have reaped lucre and profit.

"Have the game and wild beasts of the jungle complained that a longer peace would be fatal to them?

"Have the bees and birds been afraid of extermination by our sportsmen? Were the oxen weary of bearing the yoke and drawing the plough?

"Haddest thou some other reason unknown to us? Be it as it may, as far as we are concerned we have had enough, and, if such be thy good pleasure, we will that peace be restored to us.

"May it please thee to make known thy will!"

The djanni now pours some melted fat into a dish, and strikes a light. If the flame rises straight and high, Loha wills that the war continue; but if the flame bends, Loha accepts the reconciliation.

Counter-proof: An egg is set up on a plate of rice. As in the case of the arrow, according as it remains upright or falls over, the god will be for war or for peace:

"Loha, if thou wilt that the war be continued, give us strength to endure until the weapons fall from the hands of the latest adversary.

"If thou wilt peace, thy service shall not suffer therefrom. But if it be peace, so act upon men's hearts that the peace may be loyal and sincere. Sound the souls of our foes, sound the minds of their gods, search out the bottom of their thoughts.

"If they desire quietness as we ourselves desire it, we will dance the dance of peace, our feet shall raise a dust that will not fall again to the earth for three days."

It is enough, and negotiations are broached. They come to something. The priest convokes both tribes, and intones one of his long litanies:

"Let the assembled multitude incline their ears!

"Behold how hostilities arose. Loha said: 'Let there be war!'

"Loha entered into the tools, and from instruments of peace they were changed into weapons of offence. He made himself the edge of the axe, he made himself the point of the arrow.

"He entered into what we ate, into what we drank; all who ate and drank were filled with fury, and the women, who are yet the friends of peace, stirred the fire instead of extinguishing it.

"Love, friendship, gave place to hatred and discord; a great war was the result.

"Now has Loha had what he willed, and the earth is made fat with blood. Now it is enough!

"Let the weapons be blunted, let the anger be quenched! Let love and friendship come back!

"Loha, be graciously pleased to turn now thy steps elsewhere; and thou, Goddess of Increase, look upon us with favour, and cause our people to prosper and multiply!"

The priests then sprinkle the congregation with holy

mud, a mixture of consecrated water, and earth taken from an anthill or a nest of termites.

No sooner is the treaty concluded than the combatants of a few hours before rush into a dance of peace,—jig, leap, and bound with an enthusiasm that rises to frenzy, and carries off the last traces of ill-will and stifled resentment. Reconciliation is accounted to bestow the keenest joy of which the heart is capable in this world. This ecstasy has been inspired by Loha; it would be impious to repress, disrespectful to moderate it. A fortnight is not too long to recover from the fatigue of three or four hours of such violent exertion.

To the Khond, who is a man conscious of his noble destiny, there seem to be no finer occupations than war and agriculture. He scorns all industries that can be carried on sitting, all trades in which a man can grow old at his ease. The plough gives him rest after his combats, and his combats refresh him after the labour of the plough. Amongst this singular people, war does not cut short relations between hostile families and tribes, or put an end to gallantry and proposals of marriage. Even weddings are not postponed until the conclusion of peace; the belligerents suspend the massacre to meet at feasts and junketings, where they treat each other courteously, and disport themselves, it seems, with perfect carelessness, beginning on the morrow to slay one another again with as much ferocity as good temper. Cruel they are, but not malicious; their murder is merry. This must be attributed to the perfect good faith with which they ascribe death and victory to the personal intervention of their deities, and hold them alone responsible.

Assuredly the Khond tribes understand war differently from ourselves. They look upon it as the accomplishment of a religious rite and a moral duty, thanks to which the masculine population gains tone and nerve, thanks to which the gods are sated with blood, that precious human blood for which they seem so often athirst.

Similarly the ancient Mexicans from time to time sent one another a message: "Our gods are hungry. Come, friends, let us slay one another that we may give them to eat!" Thus in 1454, at the time of the great famine, the priests complained, in the name of the Immortals, that the prisoners, procured by distant expeditions, arrived too weary and thin to be tempting to the gods. Consequently the free Republics on one side, and the three Kingdoms on the other, agreed that they would keep up a continual war, and that they would fight in knightly fashion, at intervals, and in places determined upon beforehand, with the object, not of conquest, but of making prisoners, who should glut the hunger of the divinities.

After having described how Kolhs and Khonds live, and notably, how they marry, how they kill their daughters, and in what fashion they slay one another in their tournaments, let us briefly tell what are their funeral customs, and what ideas they have conceived as to existence after death.

Cremation, a much honoured practice amongst these tribes, the right of chiefs, patriarchs, and great personages, and in general use for the majority of adult males, is uniformly refused to the scrubby rubbish of women and children. Being interrogated as to this diversity of treatment, the aborigines explain that cremation requires too much expenditure and too many ceremonies to be practised lavishly. This motive is plausible, but must we be content with it? How often do peoples hold as sacred customs which they have transmitted from time immemorial without understanding them! Customs borrowed from ignorant predecessors, or from neighbours who were no better informed. From the practical point of view, the alleged reason does not seem to us decisive; and indeed this very utilitarian character causes us to look on it with suspicion, in connection with a class of things wherein mankind have rarely prided themselves on their moderation and good sense. If

the Khonds aim at economy when women and children are in question, why are they compelled to spend when it is a question of fathers and brothers? Death is universally considered to be the gate into the supernatural world; now in matters of imagination and of faith, men do not appeal to science or to good sense. They have always applied to dreams to explain death.

Interment and cremation depend upon entirely different systems. According to the ancient theory, death is the dissociation of the organism, and restores to the elements what they had lent; the Spirit—a spark of light—flies with the flame into the ethereal regions, towards the sun, towards the distant stars. Honour to them whose remains are laid upon the pyre! Other the fate of those who are interred; their souls, containing only aqueous and earthy principles, end with the present existence, or scarcely live beyond it; they are of mortal and inferior nature, in opposition to the divine nature of the Spirit. The Mosinœkis also, in Asia Minor, burnt men after death and buried women. Is an explanation, which is held to be good and valid as regards an ancient community, traversed by the Ten Thousand in their famous retreat, to be considered insufficient for the recently discovered Khonds?

Besides, cremations are not everywhere identical; they require a ritual, which varies according to caste or quality. Here individuals are burnt standing, fastened against a maowah tree; there, lying down, with the face turned towards the south. When the ashes, together with the bones, have been gathered up, these mournful relics are laid upon a bed of rice (probably to render them innocuous, or else more apt to germinate again) and carried in procession through the streets of the village, before the dwellings of kinsfolk and friends. At each door the dead makes salutation, and is saluted; he is taken to see for the last time the trees he has planted, the fields he has tilled; he is carried before the Boy-house where he has so

often danced. Amongst the Ooraons the bones are laid beneath a massive stone shaded by a tamarind; amongst the Kherias of Chota Nagpore, they are thrown into the river, which will carry them down into the valley once inhabited by their ancestors, before they were driven out by the Aryan invasion.

It is to secure the happiness of the departed, and also, and more particularly, the peace of the survivors, that most religions have contrived funeral rites which banish the soul to regions whence it cannot come, except at fixed periods, and whither it must return at a given moment. Since it is followed by a trail of deleterious vapours and the poisonous exhalations of the sepulchre, since it breathes forth fever and pestilence, since it infects even those whom it has cherished, the soul cannot take it ill to be subjected to many a quarantine and many a purification before it be permitted to draw near to the living, who breathe air by their nostrils, and whose breasts are founts of warm blood.

What the dead best know how to do is to kill. Wicked sorcerers and accused wizards work by their intervention. Sorceresses scale the roof of the straw-thatched hovels, make a hole, and drop down a string to touch the body of the person to be bewitched. By means of this thread they suck out the blood, cause poison to flow into the stomach,[1] rot the bones. If life and health are dear to you, do not allow yourself to be encountered by a woman who has died in child-bed; she haunts her tombstone! She is clothed in a long white shift, her face is black and mournful, her back is smeared with soot, and her feet turned backwards. Beware too of the demon of epilepsy who hovers over Djeypour! Flames issue from his mouth. At midnight he lurks in a dark corner, or perches on the ridge of a roof, ready to pounce upon any imprudent person wandering in the streets. Tigers have plenty of prey in the jungle; they

[1] Shortt, *Journal of the Ethnological Society.*

never would come forth to tear ox or goat, still less to devour a man, did not a God give them an express commission to do so, or some malevolent sorcerer make himself into a *nilipa* or man-tiger by slipping into their streaky skins.

To escape the injurious action of these spirits and their abettors, the priests are applied to, as official mediums, between the worlds of the living and the dead; sorcerers themselves, but for a good motive. As their office is recognised to be indispensable, the community grant them the usufruct of the "field of the Gods." Their life might seem easy, were it not passed in a seclusion unpleasant to many; were they not forbidden to take their places in the noble sport of battle, to share the meals of the laity, to eat of food prepared by profane hands. Aspirants are not numerous, though the sacerdotal profession is quite free and open as regards both entrance and exit,—always excepting that devoted to the worship of the Sun, which it is thought desirable to make hereditary in certain families. Any one, no matter who, has a right to consecrate himself to the service of all other divinities, after the needful apprenticeship. The candidate withdraws into the forest, where he puts himself in connection with the divinities who swarm in the thickets, with the divinities who teem in the brakes. He lets his hair and beard grow, and when they are long and bushy enough, he acquires the gift of divination. But he will not be accepted as a prophet until he has proved that he does know how to predict the future; certainly a very reasonable precaution. The divinity takes possession of his person by making him sneeze; he becomes violently agitated, like one possessed, as he pretends to be; he howls, vociferates, and raves in the most orthodox fashion. When the need arises, he goes witch-hunting, ferrets out evil sorceresses, and denounces them, that their two back incisors may be drawn. This treatment renders them impotent, incapable of pronouncing their incantations with the needful distinctness. Imperfect utter-

ance would irritate the demon, who would cause the ill invoked by the stammerers upon others to recoil upon themselves. The Maghreb Arabs[1] also were acquainted with this simple and expeditious process. The priest, who is sorcerer or anti-sorcerer himself, as occasion requires, calms the fury of tigers, and turns aside the pestilence. He finds the black stone haunted by the fever, sprinkles it with blood, lays it solemnly beneath a certain tree, and encloses it in a plantation of euphorbia.

He performs other exploits. He collects old brooms, pots with holes, cracked gourds, and dilapidated baskets, all objects which spirits that have broken loose are much inclined to haunt; he throws them into a deserted spot, into the depths of the forest, or hangs them on the arm of a gibbet, or the branches of a dead tree. He coats them over with blood or brandy, and when the greedy demons have flung themselves upon the bait he imprisons them in an enclosure of stakes, on which he hangs rusty weapons, a fence which they dare not cross.[2]

It is for the djanni to propitiate the fourteen national patron saints and the eleven local divinities, not forgetting dryads, nymphs of river and fountain, fauns and satyrs. Some there be who live upon earth; there are others beneath; these come forth from the fissures in the soil, to show themselves to their worshippers, and go marauding amongst the corn; empty or burnt ears have been devoured by them.[3] Beneath an exceptionally lofty tree dwells the Great Father, or Pitabaldi, in the likeness of a stone, which the faithful come to smear with saffron. It is the djannis again who interpret the will of Fate. Their oracles are given by consulting the oscillations of a pendulum, or else by breaking an egg and examining the configuration of yolk and white. The Moondahs keep a sort of Easter, during which festival, each amuses himself by knocking his egg against that of the

[1] *Chronique de Tabari.* [2] Dubois, *Mœurs de l'Inde.*
[3] Dalton, Macpherson.

passer-by. This is in imitation of the great Sing Bonga, who broke, with a mere hen's egg, the iron globes held out to him by his rivals, the Asours, the Blacksmith Gods. Eggs are everywhere the interpreters of destiny. The Ooraons meditatively eat some on the site of a hut they intend to build, or a village they intend to found, a site which they have already made propitious by throwing down some rice.

To ward off evil spirits, to look to the supply of good auguries, these are the ordinary occupations of a priest; his more solemn duties consist in slaying the victims whose blood is to quench the thirst of the deities, of those thousands upon thousands of imps who swarm in forest and open country, in air and water, in the caverns under ground. If he seems great when he sheds the blood of fowls, goats, and bulls, he appears sublime when he is immolating human victims. How august is the function of slaughtering infants, grown men, young maidens!

Sacrifice, under its varied forms, in its manifold acceptations, sacrifice is the fundamental doctrine of Religion. "Slay! slay!" This word of the bishop who massacred Béziers, might have been inscribed upon the pediment of certain edifices which have less deserved the name of temples than of slaughter and scalding houses. The flesh of men, the meat of beasts, for these the appetite of the Gods has been insatiable. In particular, the Earth, the old ogress Demeter, has showed herself more hungry and thirsty than all the other Immortals. This is explicable. With her ample fecundity, with her incessant procreations, the great and teeming Mother, who causes a swarming life to increase and multiply in every tiniest molecule of matter, can never have too much blood to drink, too much delicious red blood. Blood, the element pre-eminently plastic, the constituent principle of nutritive milk and generative sperm, blood was looked upon as the very soul of living organisms. But there is blood and blood; the blood of man was held most precious

of all, richest in force and vitality. It was believed that water was concentrated in blood, especially in human blood, which could sublimate itself into divine blood. Blood, they said, conserved life throughout nature, even in plants and in spirits. Blood was shed to Manes to restore their intelligence and sensibility, was served out to the Olympians to keep them in health and vigour, and to the Earth, generatrix of harvests, to fertilise her. Men have esteemed it an honour to be prodigal of this blood, this infallible panacea, this elixir of supreme efficacy; they have deemed it a glory to spill it without stint; it must be admitted that they have grown accustomed to pour it out like water.

The Khonds, a tribe forgotten behind their ramparts of forest and marsh, have preserved in its primitive integrity the ancient belief, according to which the most potent virtue resides in blood given without repugnance or regret. They believe that no act is more meritorious than to immolate oneself for the benefit of the community. Nevertheless such acts of devotion have always been rare, even amongst a people who are the bravest of the brave, and each one of whom knows how to die, when he needs must, nobly and simply. The Khond even prefers to sacrifice the lives of others rather than his own; his fellow-citizens still praise his generosity when he buys human creatures wherewith to regale the gods. He who desires to make himself popular, and deserve the favour of heaven, announces that on such a day he will have one or several victims butchered. Families, villages, and tribes, club together to give a great feast, a magnificent *auto-da-fe*, to their saints, patrons, and protectors. Theoretically, male sufferers are preferred to female, and the more beautiful those presented, the more costly the offering. Many were the divinities flattered by such an attention; many also the pretexts. Any public or private occasion would serve—seed-time, harvest, clearing a piece of land, long rains, persistent drought, a sick child, or a woman who wanted a son.

In pressing calamities nothing must be spared. During the great butcheries of ancient days, it was not two or three persons who were sacrificed, but twenty, thirty, or more. In view of constant and accidental needs, it was recognised as necessary to lay in a supply of victims, to keep a stock of offerings ready to the priest's hand; it was needful that the deity should constantly have bread, plenty of bread, upon his board. Human meat must, therefore, be provided in readiness. This might seem difficult.

"The supply answers to the demand," teaches Bastiat, author of brilliant variations upon the theme of *Harmonies Economiques*. Where a need manifests itself, it is not long before a market is created. Cannibal gods were hungry; they could pay; therefore purveyors made their appearance: Harris, Gahingas, Dombogos, and specially Panous,[1] a population of weavers and dealers in second-hand wares, who surround and exploit the masters of the soil. In return for the protection accorded by the Khonds, they serve, and to a certain extent dominate them. Indeed, these Panous have known how to make themselves indispensable. They contrive small jobs, constitute themselves advisers, interpreters and agents, public and private messengers, sorcerers or djanni; one might fancy them the Jews or Tsiganes amongst the Magyar, Servian, or Roumanian peasantry. They conduct the commerce between wild mountain and civilised plain, carrying produce and orders; they take cakes of wax and loads of saffron to the low country, and bring thence jewels, salt, iron, and children. Sometimes they return with a whole caravan of little creatures, kidnapped from poor folk, who not being able to succeed in feeding their family, were ready to exchange a youngster for three or four pieces of silver. In Boustar, Djeypour, Kalahandi, and other places, the traffickers in human flesh came to terms with brigands, who set forth upon the chase, and surprising some young rogue or some little maid behind the

[1] *Panu, Panva, Panoua, Panove, Panovo.*

hedges, gagged them, bandaged their eyes, and carried them off. When the Panous chanced upon some women, some unhappy wretches accused of sorcery, of whom their fellow-citizens wanted to get rid, that was a capital stroke of business. Brothers have sold their sisters. Adults were very dear, without reckoning the cost of transport. In these human shambles, as in those of animals, young fat meat commanded better prices than that which was thin, stringy, or as yet unset. An adult male only came upon the market under very exceptional circumstances, and he was put down on the tariff for a buffalo, a draught ox, a milch cow, a goat, a silken garment, a copper basin, a large dish, a cluster of bananas, &c.—forty articles in all, a fixed price, always the same.[1]

No victim could be sacrificed if his price had not been liquidated in full. This condition was indispensable. The liturgy insisted upon the fact that there was no sin in slaying the man, provided he had been bought for ready money. All demands, all discussion must have been anticipated. Criminals and prisoners of war would have been worthless, their life was not costly enough to sacrifice. Though the Khonds largely practised infanticide, they neither gave nor sold any of the girls they were so ready to kill. The earnest-money once pocketed, the merchant was bound to deliver the stipulated number of heads upon the appointed day, should he, to make up the number, have to supply those of his own children. He was even answerable to the community for subsequent accidents. If the victim escaped from execution, the blame was laid upon the seller; the wretched man must, therefore, be the head of a family. The contracts declared him the father of the subjects he sold, a formula which occasionally expressed the actual truth, and which informs us as to the primitive character of the institution.

"It is told that some Khonds were travelling with one of

[1] Arbuthnot, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1837.

these worthy purveyors in a district hostile to the bloody rite. The middleman was met by a kinsman of his, who was in despair because his cousin—he loved her—had been delivered over to the butcher by this unnatural father. He walked up to the fellow, crying,—

"'There thou art, father who sellest thy own blood!' And he spit in his face. Immediately the Khonds intervened, anxious to console their companion.

"'Be not vexed! This buffalo of a man is ignorant that by sacrificing thy child thou hast been our benefactor, and that of all mankind. Be not disquieted! The Gods shall wipe away the spittle which this lout has just set upon thy face.'"[1]

We are inclined to believe that originally the Panous were under an obligation to furnish the masters of the soil with a tribute of heads, a tribute which must have been gradually transformed into an optional bargain. Thus the Tchoutias caused a certain number of victims to be sent to them every year by a neighbouring tribe, which being enfranchised from all other dues was called *sar* or free.[2] Another example. The Bhouyas of Bengal had formerly a sort of king who, brandishing his sabre, "the sabre of the dynasty," cut off the head of a member of the high and noble family of Kopat, which held considerable domains in fief to indemnify them for this gloomy service. In the course of time the ceremonial was modified; the man fell beneath the sword, but its stroke was merely a feint, and the victim of this sham decapitation reappeared three days after, giving out that he had come forth from the tomb.[3]

We have said that the Khonds killed their daughters, but did not sacrifice them. This statement is too positive, and must be rectified and explained. They did not sacrifice their children, because the Panous gave up theirs; but what if the Panous had failed? Many a passage in the liturgy, many an article in the dogmatic theology, proves that in such a case

[1] Macpherson. [2] Dalton. [3] Dalton.

they must have quenched the thirst of the ferocious goddess with the blood of their own offspring, even with that of their first-born, as did formerly the worshippers of Moloch, and all those Abrahams who slew their Isaacs. Doubtless parents did not offer their legitimate issue to Tari, but Tari made up for this by taking the illegitimate. We know that in Khondia marriages were rare, on account of the high price quoted for girls; but the young men who could not enter upon formal wedlock, contracted temporary unions with the intended victims, with those very young women bought for immolation. These knew themselves reserved for a cruel death; but why not make the best of a life to be, unhappily, so short? Rather than augment their misfortune by constant apprehension, did they not do well to laugh and make merry, to sing and dance, to love and be loved? They too felt the need of caresses and gentle pastimes. "Let us take," they said, "a first lover, a second if he appears; we have no time to be coy." Prostitution flourished under the shadow of the sanctuaries of the aborigines, as in the Brahmin temples, where hierodules and bayaderes still nestle. The poor creature asked nothing better than to be with child, for then she was spared, at least until after she was confined and had finished suckling the infant. After the first parturition, her ardent desire would be for a second, and then for a third; the respite might be continued indefinitely. Affections grew tender and deep. Despite the sword always hanging over their head, many were the unions where there was mutual love; from the edge of the precipice they cast stealthy glances into the yawning abyss. Often wretched girls were bought, and made "gay ladies" (alas, what a gaiety!), with the avowed intention of slaying them before Pennou when they became too old. More than one was immolated with the child she held in her arms. Mother, boys, and girls, all went the same way.

It would have been grievous to the fathers to take part in the slaughter of their children. Cannibalism itself has its

fits of humanity. It was a rule with villages to exchange their *poussiahs*,—this was the designation of the unlucky offspring. A djanni appeared and carried off the innocents, as a butcher carries away calves in his cart. Everything took place in a becoming manner. Do you think the Khonds were ignorant of the consideration due to public decency, personal sympathies, individual commiseration?

By furnishing themselves with victims from outside, and sending to a distance the children whose birth they had witnessed, they secured the advantage of being inspired with less pity for those immolated. Not that they were hard upon them, or treated them with severity until their sad end; quite the contrary. The poussiahs were the general favourites, the spoilt children of the community, at the expense of which they were clothed and fed—fed even with choice viands, for it was desirable that they should be pretty, pleasing, agreeably plump. Generally they entered families of note, who considered that to shelter them was their special prerogative, and a source of prosperity. To eat of the same dish with them was good for the health, and a cure for sickness.[1] Thus they shared the bed, work, and play of companions of their own age, and, if the fate which awaited them was not concealed, they were deluded by the hope that they would not be sacrificed for a long while, that they were too much loved not to be kept for the last. If they lived to grow up, there was not a girl or woman who was not proud of their favours. Relations between these slaves of both sexes were especially encouraged, for the fruit of their union belonged to the bloody Goddess; their fertility secured the perpetuity of the sacrifices. Besides, the soil would be ill fertilised with sterile blood.

Ten or twelve days before the great ceremony, the patricians and notables of the village bathed and purified themselves, according to the ritual, in the sacred grove, majestic

[1] Campbell.

trees left standing from the primitive forest, refuge of wood-nymphs, dryads, and hamadryads. The goddess was warned to hold herself in readiness, the feast was preparing.

The three first days were spent in orgies, which we are told were indescribable, and in which women sometimes figured in the accoutrement of men, armed as warriors. It was necessary to thrill the torpid senses of the great spouse of the Sun-God, to stir her sleeping fecundity, to excite her desires by naively lascivious spectacles. There was an uproar of singing and shouting, a confused noise of tambourines and bagpipes, answered by the echoes from hill to hill. The young folks jigged and frolicked about, and whilst they danced, the girls scraped the ground with their heels, and pressed it with caressing fingers—"Awake, awake, Earth, our friend!" Thus at the festivals of seed-time, did the Latins invoke Ops Consiva, whilst scratching the earth with their nails.[1] Each has made himself as fine as possible, has bedaubed himself with red. The copper glitters, the iron jingles. The hunters strut about in their bear or tiger skins, or feathered like a cock of the jungle or a pheasant of the woods, whilst the zealous of both sexes shake their brooms and plumed thyrses to simulate flights of peacocks. The miserable heroine has been thoroughly washed, and has been made to fast, that she may be as pure within as without; she is dressed in new clothing. In solemn procession she is conducted from door to door, then led away into the dark forest, the abode of the Goddess. Beneath the green, leafy garlands, the priest binds her with cords to a flower-bedecked May-pole, thirty or forty feet high, surmounted by a peacock's head.

Here the peacock, king of the agricultural feast, evidently represents the Sun,—as many suns as golden eyes upon the fan. The throne whereon the Great Mogul was seated was in the shape of a peacock spreading his glittering gems:—

[1] Lasaulx.

"May the happy days of Delhi return! Bless the seat which thy peacock lights up with his jewels!"[1]

The royal seat of Burmah represents a peacock, and also a hare, a symbol betokening the two-fold solar and lunar descent; the standard of the dynasty bears a peacock flying upon a silver field.[2] A Garro sorcerer took part in no religious rite before he had shod himself with sandals and stuck peacock feathers in his hair. The Khonds swear by the quills of this bird, also by the tiger and the termite. The elephant is another symbol of the Sun, in his character of spouse of Demeter; and before the elephant women bow themselves, they smear his temples with vermilion, and make their children step in his foot-prints. Therefore it is not surprising that the image of the king of the forest should often adorn the sacrificial stake. It sometimes happens that a second pole is set up in honour of the Goddess, who is then represented by three stones, in middle of which a copper peacock is buried.

Let us return to the victim. She has been crowned with flowers, anointed with oil and melted butter, and painted with yellow saffron, the colour of the spirits of light and of heaven. And now the people fall down and worship her. They worship her as another Tari. For in the truly orthodox conception of sacrifice, the consecrated offering, be it man, woman, or virgin, lamb or heifer, cock or dove, represents the deity himself. It was for this that the Mexicans dressed it in all the pomp of the vestments and attributes of the Immortal it was to personify. The execution of wretched slaves, of detestable malefactors, was pitiful and mean; but glorious was the immolation of God or Goddess, and how marvellous the virtue of their blood outpoured!

Tari, says the Khond legend, had intended to submit each time to the sacrifice in her own person. She wished to do like the great King Vikramajit,[3] who (more zealous

[1] Urdu song. [2] Yule.

[3] Sherwill, *The Rajmahal Hills*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, 1851.

than the worshipful Saint Denis or even the blessed Saint Oriel[1]) cut off his own head every evening, and carried it as an offering to the Devas.[2] But the worshippers of the Goddess saw some difficulty in this system, and assured her that it would suffice if she caused herself to be slain by proxy. Tari was graciously pleased to yield to the reasons given. She accepted the theory, which has since had the force of a dogma, that the gods ask nothing better than to be immolated for the benefit of mankind, but they have often other things in hand, and at the crucial moment may not be disposed to come up to the scratch. If they do not intervene in person, they will intervene by deputy, become incarnate in *meriahs* or mediators.[3] The meriah will be the plenipotentiary of the god, the agent of his power, his other self.[4]

On this principle, the Khonds and their like set up their victim as a divinity, flatter her, laud her beauty, sing her praise, dance around her. At nightfall they rush forward to touch her; the unhappy creature brings good luck! In the twinkling of an eye, she is stripped of her raiment, which is torn to pieces amongst those who contend for it. They scent their hands in her hair, scrape off her cosmetics; entreat some spittle, which they will carefully spread over their faces.[5] Thereupon the multitude withdraws, leaving the new Goddess firmly fastened to the stake, her throne, her column of glory; they leave her alone, hungry, trembling, naked, in the chill of night, amid the terrors of the forest, to await the horrible tragedy of the morrow. What a vigil! The new daughter of the Gods is deemed to be in intimate converse with great Tari, who has become her

[1] Frodoard, *Histoire de l'Eglise de Reims.*

[2] Yule, *Marco Polo.*

[3] Some Indianists explain the word *meriah* by that of *mediation;* recalling that the name of the *miris* of Bengal, messengers or commissioners, signifies, "go-betweens."

[4] Timothy ii. 5; Hebrews ix. 15.

[5] Ricketts.

mother and patron. The immense solitude, the frightful silence, broken only by the mewing of the tiger, the yells of wild beasts, the mysterious voices of the forest uttering words unknown, what have these to say to the poor child? What answer has she to give to the eternal constellations, gazing down upon her with their steady eyes, to the twinkling stars that sign to her: To-morrow thou shalt be one of us?

In the morning, the whole village returns to make an end. Music, uproar; fifes, gongs, little bells; deafening shrieks and screams. They intoxicate themselves with noise and tumult, like the Bacchantes of old; as at the Mysteries of Eleusis, "they eat of the tambourine, they drink of the cymbal." For there are things to which men could never make up their minds, had they not drowned reason in drunkenness, and deadened every tender feeling in riotous excitement; did not each mean to say: "It is not my fault!" Then the crowd alone is responsible; that is, no one. The axiom, "the whole is the sum of its parts," does not apply to multitudes.

Be this as it may, the people surround the poor girl, pity her, remind one another that only yesterday she was treated as a pet, a playmate in every amusement; they recall the words, the smart replies, the touching traits of the sufferer who is struggling in her bonds: "See how she cries! Shall you have the courage to kill her? How merry she was, how she loved to sing, how fond she was of laughing! You know that she was your boy's sweetheart? She thought she should bring you a grandson." More than one honest paterfamilias, who would be in despair if the unfortunate girl should escape, weeps, is moved to pity, as much or more than the rest; he thereby is enabled to shed some exquisitely sweet tears, and cause other kindly souls to shed them also, and, what is far more, to make the *meriah* sob, which is a good omen! We are not told that the victim bound to the stake was ever delivered. The dramatic instinct is in-born in us, the coarsest and most

brutal feel now and again the need to pity; an unexceptionable proof that they are charitable and sensitive. And then it must not be forgotten that the luckless girl is already a Goddess. If she bursts into tears, the clouds will shed beneficent showers upon the fields; her breast, heaving with sighs, shaken with sobs, will communicate life to the seeds sown, fertility to the soil.

When the emotion is at its height, the officiating priest gives the signal; the multitude grows calm, and ranges itself around in an orderly manner. The divine spirit enters into the priest and inspires him, causes him to tell of the origin of the sacred institution:

"In the beginning was the Earth a formless mass of mud, and could not have borne the dwelling of a man, or even his weight; in this liquid and ever-moving slime neither tree nor herb took root.

"Then God said: Spill human blood before my face! And they sacrificed a child before Him. . . . Falling upon the soil, the bloody drops stiffened and consolidated it."

This is a somewhat general belief. Several Indian Rajahs have been known to shed human blood upon the foundations of public edifices; but the illustrious Shah Djihan was content to slaughter animals upon the first stone of Delhi.[1] Burmah rocked under foot, until Rani Attah solidified it by a sacrifice. A connected idea: Erin, the Isle of Saints, emerged from the waves every seventh year and then sunk again, until an angel threw a piece of iron on it to keep it steady.[2] The two rocks which were to be the foundation of Tyr, floated hither and thither, until they had been sprinkled with blood: "Beneath the libations of sacred blood the wandering hills took root in the waves, and on these rocks, henceforth immovable, the sons of earth raised Tyr, the large-breasted city."[3]

[1] Rajendralala Mitra, *Indo-Aryans.*

[2] Sepp, *Heidenthum und Christenthum.*

[3] Nonnos, *Dionysiæ.*

The Negroes also made the like discovery for themselves. The Grand Jagga had a man beheaded upon the spot which his palace was to occupy; he walked through the gushing blood towards the points of the compass, then gave the first blow with the pick-axe.[1]

Doubtless this belief was based upon the more or less perspicuous observation, that in zoology the formation of the skeleton generally coincides with the appearance of red blood, the agglutinous properties of which have been remarked. It was concluded that the sprinkling of blood gives consistency to mud, and also to flesh, clay of another sort. In the old days, blood cost so little! . . . But let us return to our text.[2]

"And by the virtues of the blood shed, the seeds began to sprout, the plants to grow, the animals to propagate.

"And God commanded that the earth should be watered with blood every new season, to keep her firm and solid. And this has been done by every generation that has preceded us.

"One day, Tari, seated upon a stone, was eating apples. And behold as she peeled them, the goddess cut her finger, and the blood dripped upon the soil, and moistened the arid ground. And forthwith, from every tiniest drop sprang up rice-plants, and the country began to bloom."[3]

"Tari gazed long upon that rice, so thick, so green. She understood how great were the virtues of blood. If but a few drops had caused this plenty, what fertility would not flow from her veins wide opened! Then thought Tari

[1] Bastian, *San Salvador.*

[2] Several texts, slightly different in their wording, have been reproduced below in a somewhat condensed form.

[3] Flowers sprang from the wound given to Odin by a wild boar. Roses sprang up from the blood of Venus, when she was pricked by thorns as she ran towards the dying Adonis. And, in like manner, Our Lady, the Mother of Grace, walking upon a rock, cut her heel, and left behind her a trail of these flowers, which have since been called "Roses of Jericho."—Sepp, *Heidenthum und Christenthum.*

to offer herself as a sacrifice. Tari came forward, and held up her brow to the knife, saying: "Behold me, I am the meriah, I come to be immolated." [1]

"The Gods and men answered: 'Thou sayest well, thou doest well, O Tari Pennou! But if we immolate thee once for all, the virtue of thy sacrifice will grow weaker day by day. It will be better to sacrifice thee every year, and each time that there shall be need.

"'For this cause, O Pennou, shalt thou enter into the bodies of meriahs at the season of seed-time, or when evil spirits shall lay waste the earth, puffing forth the empoisoned winds of drought, the miasms of sterility and pestilence. Then shalt thou be sacrificed for the good of all.'

"And the thing was agreed upon between Tari, the Gods, and men. Since, O Khonds, has it been ever thus.

"Wherefore, then, O people, do ye lament? And thou, meriah, why dost thou scream, why dost thou sob? This is no fault of thine or ours, or of the kinsfolk who sold thee. Thou hast been bought, thou hast been paid for. By our labour and the sweat of our brow have we acquired thy person, therefore have we not sinned against thee. A sacrifice is needful—thou, he, she, what matter? The lot has fallen upon thee, Fate has pronounced judgment. When fresh harvests must be borne by the weary and exhausted earth, how shall her strength be restored if not by blood? Give thine, give it as Pennou gave hers, without faltering!"

Let us introduce a parenthesis. Whether the aborigines have borrowed this portion of their worship from the Hindoos, or whether the two religions are alike in nature and origin, it is incontestable that the Khond theory of sacrifice is identical with that developed in the Bhagavat-Gita:

"Together with man, the Creator created sacrifice, saying: 'It is by virtue of sacrifice that you shall propagate yourselves. Men! sacrifice shall be your cow of plenty. By it ye shall make the Gods live, and the Gods shall make you

[1] *Cf.* Hebrews x. 7, ix. 14, &c.

live. And by thus causing one another to live, ye shall enjoy a happy existence. But whoso eats, without giving to the Immortals a share of the victuals which spring from them, is no better than a robber. Those who are honest and upright think first of the Gods, and afterwards of themselves. By caring for naught but the belly, men swallow down sin. There is no life but such as proceeds from food, and food is derived from the rains caused by sacrifice.'" [1]

Brahma is the "imperishable sacrifice"; Indra, Soma, Hari, and the other gods, became incarnate in animals to the sole end that they might be immolated. Purusha, the Universal Being, caused himself to be slain by the Immortals, and from his substance were born the birds of the air, wild and domestic animals, the offerings of butter and curds.[2] The world, declared the Rishis, is a series of sacrifices disclosing other sacrifices. To stop them would be to suspend the life of Nature.[3] Siva, to whom the Tipperahs of Bengal are supposed to have sacrificed as many as a thousand human victims a year, said to the Brahmins: "It is I that am the actual offering; it is I that you butcher upon my altars."

And the Hindoo religion is in agreement with all religions that have been self-conscious. Quetzalcoatl (if space allowed, we might comment upon the multiplied and astonishing resemblances between the symbolism of Mexican sacrifices and those of the meriahs),—Quetzalcoatl pricked his elbows and fingers so as to draw blood, which he offered up on his own altar. For nine days and nine nights the Scandinavian deity Odin was, in Odin's honour, hanged upon a tree shaken by the winds:

"I know I was hanged upon the tree shaken by the winds for nine long nights. I was transfixed by a spear; I was vowed to Odin, myself to myself."[4]

Even at the present day, the prophet Elijah, invisible upon

[1] Vastou-Yaga.
[2] *The Brahma Karma.*
[3] Wilson's *Vishnu Surana.*
[4] Edda, *Odin's Runenlied.*

Mount Moriah, continues to send up the smoke of holocausts as a sweet savour to the Eternal: "For were it not for the perpetual sacrifice, the world could not subsist," say the Rabbis.[1] Philo of Byblos relates the myth of Belus the Elder offering up his son Belus the Younger.[2] Belus sacrificing Belus became the precursor of the Eternal Jehovah.

But let us resume the thread of our liturgy:—

"All living things suffer, and thou, wouldest thou be exempt from the common anguish? Know that blood is needful to give life to the world, and to the Gods; blood to sustain the whole creation and to perpetuate the species. Were not blood spilt, neither peoples nor nations nor kingdoms could remain in existence. Thy blood poured forth, O Meriah! will slake the thirst of the Earth; she will be animated with fresh vigour.

"In thee has Pennou been born again to suffer; but thou, Goddess in thy turn, shalt be born again into her glory. Then, Meriah, remember thy Khond people, remember the village where we reared thee, where we cared for thee!

"O Tari Meriah! deliver us from the tiger, deliver us from the snake! O Pennou Meriah! grant that which our soul desireth!"

And then each begins to explain what he has most at heart. Scarcely are the invocations at an end, before the djanni seizes his hatchet and approaches the meriah. She must not die in her bonds, since she dies voluntarily, of her own free will, as they say. He loosens her from the stake, stupefies her, by making her gulp down a potion of opium and datura, then breaks her elbows and knees with the back of the hatchet.

Though obviously the same at bottom, the ritual varied as to the details of execution. Most districts had their special methods. The divinity feasted bore divers names. Some invoked the Earth, others the Sun; and in this latter case, three men, at least, were immolated, placed in a line from east to west. Victims were stoned, beaten to death with tomahawks

[1] Eisenmenger. [2] Tiele, *Histoire des Religions Anciennes.*

or heavy iron rings bought on purpose; they were strangled, they were crushed between two planks; they were drowned in a pool in the jungle, or in a trough filled with pigs' blood. A method to suit every taste. Here a large dose of some narcotic was administered to shorten suffering; there, on the contrary, the desire was to increase it, on the pretext that the more painful the sacrifice, the more efficacious it would be. Sometimes the victim was slowly roasted, a torment chosen as the most cruel of any; sometimes she was despatched by a blow to the heart, and the priest plunged a wooden image into the gaping wound, that the mannikin might be gorged with blood. Elsewhere the meriah was fastened to the stake by her hair, four men dragged her legs apart and extended her arms in a cross, and the djanni cut off her head; or else, seizing her by her four limbs, they held her in a horizontal position, her face towards the sun; the priest pronounced a short prayer, and severed her neck, which dripped into a hole, the blood flowing in streams into the Chthonic Goddess. Others made use of a more complicated process: to cause the victim to fall head foremost into the pit they suspended her over the opening by heels and neck. That she might not be strangled, she instinctively clutched the sides of the trench with her hands, and the priest with his carving knife set about slashing her ankles, thighs, and back; at the seventh stroke he cut off her head. When the thing was done, he thrust the red and sticky iron into the stake and left it there until the next sacrifice. After the third execution, the blade had deserved well of the people; they came in great pomp to unfasten it, and take it to retire upon its laurels in a temple. There was yet another method. The djanni forced the sufferer's head into a cleft bamboo, the two halves of which were drawn together with a cord by an assistant. The crowd had only been waiting for this moment; with drunken shouts and savage yells, they rushed upon the quarry, and each set to work with nails and knife; all tore off a strip of palpitating flesh, all helped to mangle and dismember.

The use of a cutlass, it should be observed, is already evidence of a certain mollification in manners, for many sacrificial offerings were torn to pieces; witness the living goat mangled in the mysteries of Bacchus Zagreus. Anciently it was a man who was rent into fragments upon the altar of Dionysus Omostes, Dionysus the Raw-Eater.[1]

Tari, worthy kinswoman of Moloch and other "gods of blood," is not the only one of her kind amongst the Khond divinities. A crowd of other genii from the air, from the earth, from under the earth, need blood, much blood. If they are not gorged with it, the soil will remain arid and unfertile; neither rain nor sun will appear in due season.

Our ancestors the Kelts also had their meriahs; they bought slaves, treated them liberally, and when the year had run its course, led them with great pomp to the sacrifice. Each twelve months the Scythian tribe of the Albanes fattened a hetaira and killed her with spear thrusts before the altar of Artemis.[2] When the fitting moment returned, hierodules, who had been fed with dainty meats, were sacrificed to the Syrian Goddess. "The spirits of the Earth thirst for blood," said Athenagorus. At the Thargelia, the Athenians splendidly adorned a man and woman, who had been entertained at the expense of the State, and led them forth in procession to be burnt at the confines of the open country. At the festivals of Patræ in Achaia, wild beasts were thrown upon a *flaming* pile; amongst the Tyrians, sheep and goats; the worship of Demeter and that of Moloch are scarcely distinguishable from each other.

> "Mos fuit in populis, quos condidit advena Dido,
> Poscere cæde Deos veniam, ac flagrantibus aris,
> Infandum dictu, parvos imponere natos;
> Urna reducebat miserandos annua casus!"[3]

[1] Plutarch, *Vita Themist.*, xii.; *Pelopon.*, xxi. Clemens, *Cohortationes ad Gentes.*

[2] Strabo.

[3] Silius Italicus, *Punica.* *Cf.* the statements of Thomas Herbert; Paul Lucas, *Voyage au Levant;* Pietro della Valle, *Viaggi.*

Let us pass over the horrors of Carthage, repeated at Upsala by the Scandinavians, at Rügen and Romova by the ancient Slavs. Until quite lately, the people of Ispahan celebrated the "Feast of the Camel," or "Of the Sacrifice of Abraham;" note the synonym. The high-priest of Mecca sent an adopted son of his own, mounted upon a consecrated camel. This animal was led in great pomp through the town; at a given moment the king let fly an arrow against its side. In a trice the poor beast was struck down, hewed in pieces, cut in slices, torn to bits, carried off and distributed far and near; every one wanted some of him, were it but the tiniest fragment, to put into a great pot of rice. The Ghiliaks,[1] and also the Aïnos, adopt a bear cub, pet and fondle it, treat it like a spoilt child, until a moment comes when they contend for pieces of its flesh. Contemporary negroes do not consider the puny results of their agriculture are over-dearly bought by impaling or decapitating young maidens magnificently decked out, being persuaded that blood is needed to attract the rain.[2] The Redskins profess the same dogma. Thus the Pawnees kill a captive from the Sioux, inflicting horrible torments upon him, and sprinkling the bean and pumpkin fields with his blood.[3] The Wolves offer up a virgin to the Genius of Maize.[4] In Mexico and Nicaragua the victim, before being slain, received more than royal honours, for it was desired that he should represent the divinity causing himself to be immolated for the good of all men. We are not told that his flesh was buried in the fields, but his heart, the fountain of blood, was the perquisite of chiefs and priests.[5] These examples may suffice.

[1] Deniker.

[2] Adams. *Cf.* the Calf of the Algerine Ahrifas.

[3] Bancroft, *Native Races of America.* P. de Smet, *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi,* 1843.

[4] James.

[5] Adolf Bastian, *Der Mensch in der Geschichte.* There is a similar custom in Lagos.

Of the meriah who has been hacked and torn to pieces, the djannis leave nothing but the entrails and the head, and the latter is generally denuded of its hair. But birds and jackals have not long to pick and gnaw, for on the morrow entrails, skull, and skeleton are burnt, together with a ram. The ashes, gathered up with care and some solemnity, are given to the winds, that they may be disseminated throughout the country; in some places they are mingled with corn and seeds which it is desired to protect from the attacks of insects. These ashes[1] possess all the properties of the living flesh, all the virtues of the blood which gives to rice, wheat, and millet the faculty to maintain and sustain life. Were it not for their action, the indigo could not acquire its beautiful blue colour, the camphor would not be deposited in the stem of the camphor-tree.[2] Were they not smeared upon the threshold, houses and granaries would be invaded by the spirits of fever, pestilence, and famine.[3]

The murderers contend for the remains of the victim, that they may bury them at once in their gardens, or hang them on a pole above the stream which waters their fields, for after sun-down the sacrificial flesh has lost its efficacy. The villages which have clubbed together for the sacrifice, organise relays, and perform miracles of speed. It is no matter whether a cultivator buries the whole corpse in his enclosure, or only the end of a little finger, the effect is the same. Upon this fundamental dogma djanni and Christian theology coincide. The divine flesh works by quality and not by quantity; it acts by its nature, and not by its bulk; it is not a manure to be spread by the cart-load, but a luminous point shining far and wide. Chthonism or Catholicism, the mystery is formulated in identical terms: the Supreme Being becomes incarnate, that he may communicate of his substance to the faithful who eat him. Tari

[1] *Cf.* Hebrews ix. 13; Numbers xix. 9.
[2] Ibn Batoutah.
[3] *Cf.* Exodus xii. 13.

transmits her fertility to the soil by the mediation of the meriah. The activity of the flesh made divine ceases at the limits of the consecrated property, and never passes those limits. The devotees of Christ are denied the ability to communicate by proxy. In the same way, when a Khond proprietor would make his furrows fruitful by means of a shred of sanctified flesh, he cannot get a friend or neighbour to supply him. The first to strike the incarnate Tari, the foremost to open those fertilising veins, to cut into the muscles which contain life, seizes upon the most delicious mouthful, the crowning slice. No cultivator but longs to be served before the others, but all dare not risk the dangerous privilege.[1] For you must know that the first to use his knife is, as it were, magnetised by the divine contact. If he were slain immediately, his body also would communicate fertility to the fields. Consequently each village makes choice of a skilful and sturdy champion, wrapped in several folds of cloth, and thus iron-proof. Whilst he is striving to get the first bite out of the meriah, his friends keep watch that he himself receives no hurt.

It would seem as if the Khonds must be desirous to pour blood, endowed with such precious qualities, down their own throats rather than to sprinkle it over their fields. Thus the Komis of Arracan riddle a bull, tied to a stake, with arrows, and men, women, and children suck the blood flowing from the wounds.[2] But in the Khond race feeling has conquered logic, and they are willing to content themselves with the blood of sheep or buffaloes, butchered in the name of Tari, to cure diverse sicknesses, such as madness and demoniac possession. When they make appeal to the ordeal or judgment of God, some rice is soaked in this blood, and the perjurer who tastes it falls dead, slain by the Goddess on the spot.

[1] Peggs.

[2] O. Donnell, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1865.

For a long while these bloody rites were only known to the civilised inhabitants of the surrounding country by vague rumours. It was only in 1836 that Russell, a witness of these atrocities, officially informed the Directorate of the East India Company about them. But how was the monstrous custom to be abolished?

Originally the people of the plain had themselves offered up meriahs to the agricultural divinities; but civilisation, as it crept up the courses of the rivers, slowly drove this cruel practice before it. At the beginning of the century, the Southern Khonds had already forsaken it, whilst the highlands remained unshaken in their orthodoxy. Each of the two camps hoisted the standard of one of the divine pair. The abolitionists held out for Boura, the Sun, the Supreme Creator. They declared him to be in a huff with his spouse, and indeed the whole feminine sex, who, it appeared, had brought evil and sin into the world. The conservatives, on the contrary, took the side of the Earth, the Universal Mother, and taught that the shedding of meriah blood was needful for the consolidation of the body politic, was the cause of their own tribal association, and even of the existence of foreign nations and all human society. The discussion grew warm, the rivalry became more pronounced, the southern kindred began to loathe the customs of their ancestors. He who had been present at one of these butcheries was looked upon as contaminated by the bloody effluvia; he would have endangered his life had he shown himself until seven days were past and gone. The Solarians, zealots for Boura, would not strike a spade into the ground during the five or six days preceding the full moon in December, this being the period at which the Demetrians were interring the meriah flesh. They even posted sentinels on the frontier, to hinder a foeman from soiling their land by bringing a fragment of the poisonous substance there. The Sun-God would not have pardoned this desecration of a country he had made his own; he would have avenged

himself by terrible plagues. And there was a contingency no less dangerous; the demons and inferior deities might get a taste for this food, and no longer care for any other:

"At Cattingya we have a jungle well stocked with game, in consequence of the saline efflorescence there, of which all animals are fond. Lo and behold, a rival tribe, to play us a trick, bury some carrion there. . . . Ever since, there has been no venison except for the hunters of Gourdapour, whilst we from Cattingya always return empty-handed. Why? Because the demons favour those who have given them a taste for human flesh!"

Here, too, would it have been well to say, "Let it alone, let it go?" Would it have been well to wait until the waxing civilisation, which had already suppressed meriahs in the south, should also suppress them in the north? That would have meant to wait patiently for centuries, or at least for two or three generations. The English Government, which directly intervened in so many less important matters, understood that they must here act a sovereign's part. Nothing could be easier in theory than to forbid human sacrifices, by a mandate for which good reasons were assigned. But it was very shortly recognised that before the Company could here have the last word, they would be obliged to break up the civil and political organisation, and possibly to destroy a portion of the people; in any case, to set out upon a succession of massacres and summary executions, the end of which it was difficult to foresee. The cure would have been worse than the disease. For some time the East India Council cautiously felt their way. The first systematic act, inspired by Macpherson, was the official recognition of these scattered tribes. They were made to understand that the Calcutta Administration had constituted itself their centre, and federated them under its presidency, declaring that in future it would take cognisance of their principal affairs, their quarrels and differences. For once, the central authority showed itself as benevolent as resolute

and prudent, and understood that a regulation stuck on the point of a bayonet would not suffice to suppress a religion. Troops were sent, commanded by intelligent officers and good men; such are to be found when they are sought for in earnest. Amongst these picked men we must give a first place to Macpherson and Campbell, Taylor, Russell, Ricketts, MacVicar, and Frye, who during the years 1848-1852 were at work in the most ill-famed districts.

Fulfilling their truly civilising mission with tact, the expedition avoided both bustle and brutality. They requisitioned the victims designed for future sacrifice, and set them free by fifties and hundreds. Although sufficiently numerous to crush any resistance that might have been offered, the troop was careful to avoid collisions; which did not hinder it from occasionally having to show its teeth and make its way by main force. Generally, the officer summoned the caciques, and explained to them what he required and why, not letting them go until they had sworn:—"May the earth refuse me her fruits, may rice choke me, may water submerge me, may the tiger devour me and my children, if I violate the engagement I take upon myself and my people to renounce the sacrifice of human beings!"

After they had taken the oath, there was no need for further disquietude, for the Khonds are men of their word. As a precautionary measure the age, name, and number of all the children were registered, especially the poussiah progeny, serfs or slaves, who might have been substituted for the titular meriahs. The British announced that they should come in following years to make inquiries. To set the Khond consciences at rest, Campbell cheerfully agreed that the Government and all its functionaries should be declared responsible before heaven and earth for the cessation of the sacrifices; he took a solemn oath by which the wrath of all the gods and goddesses was diverted upon his own head. Only, to show himself more powerful than their Olympus, he laid hands one day upon some idols, reputed

the most terrible of all, and had them trampled, as malefactors, beneath the feet of his baggage elephants.

The last act, and by no means the easiest, was to reassure the meriahs. For some few who, pale and trembling, took refuge in his camp, dragging the end of a chain, or bearing the marks of irons on their wrists and ankles, significant foretastes of the martyrdom in preparation, there were a far greater number of victims who fled their liberators and hid themselves behind the murderers. They had been led to believe that the foreigner was reserving them for more horrible torments than immolation to Tari; reserving them to be tortured, that their blood, shed drop by drop, might bring back the water to the dried-up pools of the plains; to be devoured by the sacred tigers, which the Queen of the Indies probably kept. They could not recover from their astonishment when they were declared free to go or stay. Some were placed with young chiefs or ambitious personages, with a tacit engagement that the Government would show favour to their husbands. Those put into the missionary schools were married to Protestant converts; but it was noticed that they did not come to very much good; their instructors reproached them with being capricious and insubordinate, idle and greedy. Some have been known to take to flight and return to their own villages, declaring that it was insupportable to them to dwell with strangers, and that they preferred to be butchered by their own kindred. Is it to be believed that certain ambitious girls were vexed, and regretted the glorious chance they had had of becoming goddesses? A number of meriahs were already wives and mothers. The idea that they must forsake their families drove them to despair; but it was given out that the union of each of them with her lover should be declared a valid marriage. Directly this decision was arrived at, several, who had concealed themselves, suddenly made their appearance. The prospect of being immolated, sooner or later, terrified them less than the certainty of being immediately

taken away from their surroundings and their affections. Poor creatures, who resigned themselves to a horrible death that they might enjoy love and maternity for a while! They had accepted their own sacrifice, being themselves convinced that their immolation would be really salutary, and that their blood would spring up again in blessings for the community.

As for the djannis and *patours*, they were disturbed, but not convinced; they would gladly have resisted to the end, but what reply was possible to the powerful arguments of cannon and muskets? It was sufficiently plain that Loha, the Sun, that Boura, the Lord of Hosts, were not of a stature to strive with an English colonel. Thus it became needful to yield.

To yield—or rather to come to terms. For religion, even amongst savages, never owns itself beaten. The Church shows the most pacific disposition, the most conciliatory temper, directly she encounters folks who are prepared to take a decided course; under such circumstances, she is admirable at a compromise, ingenious in finding means of accommodation with heaven. To the violent she shows the treasures of her indulgence, lets them take heaven by storm; but to those whom she suspects of weakness, her arrogance knows no bounds; to the vanquished she has never known pity.

When they saw themselves driven back by gunners and carabineers, the Khond theologians made the opportune discovery that Tari had recommended, but by no means commanded, that human victims should be brought to her, and that other offerings, apes, monkeys, or wild pigs, would suit her almost as well. At the right moment, they perceived that meriah flesh is superior to other flesh relatively but not absolutely; that a man's head is worth more than a dozen bovine heads, but less than a hundred. Thus it was possible to come to an agreement.

For a long while the immolation of a person was the supreme act of religions, the grand method of purchasing the favour

of the celestial or infernal powers, so far as these two can be distinguished. But as knowledge waxed, faith waned. Pity came into play. The cultivator discovered that to obtain rain in due season, it was little matter whether he shed the blood of a child or a lamb upon the altar of the cloud-god; and henceforward he preferred to sacrifice the young of a sheep rather than his own son. He was, however, far as yet from suspecting that, blood or no blood, it would rain neither more nor less. The representatives of the deity were forced to make up their minds to the unseasonable discovery, and accept the modifications it imposed. Alas, they resigned themselves, not being able to do otherwise! Directly a priest accepted a bull, directly he allowed rams to be given in the stead of a man, fiction was substituted for reality, orthodoxy began to vanish into nothingness. Substitutions, continually growing bolder, marked the decline and measured the degeneracy of the dogma. The Gods by allowing themselves to be haggled with, found themselves diddled and tricked; their portion was pared down to a shaving. When the Hindoo Gods were still akin to Tari and Loha, meriahs, many meriahs, were sacrificed to them also; but in time the man was replaced by a horse, the horse by a bull, the bull by a ram, the ram by a kid, the kid by fowls, the fowls by flowers, many flowers. "Too many flowers!" exclaimed Calchas. Formerly a magnificent banquet was served to Porusha Medha, a hundred and twenty-five persons,[1] not one less; men and women, boys and girls in the flower of their age. But reform supervened; and now the victims were bound as before to the stake, but afterwards, amid litanies to the immolated Narayana, the sacrificing priest brandished a knife and severed the bonds of the captives; then served the dainty-bred god with what?—A meagre repast of melted butter! Thus the Persians came to present to the Genius of Fire, not the covenanted bull, but a hair, one single hair, shown from afar off. The Slavs sub-

[1] Yadjour-Veda.

stituted an offering of mere toys, and some scent, for butcheries of men. The Chinese, who are always ingenious, reduced paper dolls to ashes. Likewise the Romans, having engaged to furnish Tiber with a yearly feast of thirty men, supplied him with so many mannikins of osier. They had promised hinds, which they came to replace by ewes, clearly specifying that these ewes were called "hinds."[1] Elsewhere, instead of human heads, cocoa-nuts, or heads of garlic or poppy, were stuck on spears. In the merriest village festivals in France the youngsters and rustics regale themselves, for a joke, with pastry figures, of the origin of which they are entirely ignorant. An innocent recollection of a terrible ritual.

The djanni could not deny that their Tari was already used to compromises. She had already permitted the substitution of a buffalo for a man at the feast of sowing. The devotees of Demeter at Kalahandi made choice of a fine calf, which became communal property. Directly he was weaned, he was allowed to run as free as the horse destined by the Brahmins for the sacrifice of the *Açvamedha*. He found his stable door always open, wandered in the fields, gamboled in the gardens, browsed upon the barley, nibbled the vegetables, laid waste the patches where they grew. He never met the cultivators without receiving fond caresses and dainty morsels; he had everything to content him. Becoming a fine bull, he was led to the sanctuary of the Goddess.

Vessels are ranged round the altar containing specimens of the seeds to be made fruitful. Whilst the animal is sniffing at them, licking one and another, a well-directed blow fells him; he is slaughtered, and one of his forelegs is put into his mouth, a way of showing that the pious beast brought himself to the sacrifice. The carcase is promptly cut up by the peasants; each seizes upon a scrap, and runs off to bury it in his enclosure. The blood and entrails are set apart, and pitchers are broken, and whole potfuls of victuals cast upon these remains.

[1] Festus, *De Verborum Significatione. Cervaria.*

On the morrow, the labourers take their places before the heaped up grains, and each plunges the share of his plough into the pile to communicate prolific virtues to it. Next, a djanni, called Pot Radj, the name of the Faun he is supposed to represent, announces himself by the noisy cracking of a whip. He brings a kid, "the victim of the plough," *hari meriah*, cuts its throat in a twinkling, mingles its flesh with that of the bull slain the evening before, and puts the meat into a basket. A naked man springs forth from amidst the labourers, rushes at the basket, seizes it and flees. The crowd dash after him. With huge strides and noisy vociferations, they race round the village, whilst the runner tears off pieces with his teeth and flings them right and left; he calls the demons to the prey, and the peasants on their side give them largess of sheep and fowls. With drawn swords the paiks keep watch that no stranger filches the tiniest mouthful, for one lump would be sufficient to juggle away the merits of the costly sacrifice. This is not all. On returning from the expedition the multitude seize the first bull they meet and slaughter him, and every one who has the right takes his share.

During the two first days the offerings have been made in the name of the community, but on the third and fourth days, private persons are at liberty to court the special favour of Tari, and any other rural divinities they think fit, by gifts made in their own name. In this they are not sparing, and it is not rare to see a large village sacrificing four or five dozen oxen, and sheep by the hundred. Their heads are stacked in two heaps, and then those women who have taken a vow set about stripping off their slender costume, and running naked this way and that, surrounded by their female friends. They leap and dance, shake branches, and wave foliage. Some desire to be made fruitful at the same time as the earth, others thank the Goddess who has made them mothers.

Let us remark in passing, and without entering further

into the matter, that agricultural rites show a certain predilection for the nudity of the celebrants. Thus, an annual festival in the neighbourhood of Madras assembles myriads of pilgrims, who slaughter whole flocks, and, when the air is thick with the vapours of blood, undress and walk in procession, waving green branches, then go and bathe. In the same way, the Slav *Dodolas* walked through the fields, clothed only in ferns and flowers. A legend of Tchamba, near Amretsir, tells how the water obstinately refused to flow in a canal which had just been dug. The wise men decided, that to set the artery of irrigation in motion, it was indispensable that the fairest and most virtuous princess of the reigning house should consent to have her head cut off. The generous maiden willingly agreed. But this was the least of her merits, for she had also to make up her mind to run naked down the bed of the canal, before the eyes of the assembled crowd. The Earl of Coventry did not ask so much of the illustrious Lady Godiva. But let us return to our Khonds.

On the fifth and last day, a grand procession of the faithful wends its way, with musicians going before, to the temple of Pot Radj, to take part in a great liturgical act, a true mystery.

Beneath the altar is hidden a lamb, for which the officiating priest feigns to make search. He does not fail to light upon it, cracks his whip (doubtless in imitation of thunder), and touches the beast with the handle. He makes the creature insensible by magnetic passes; and, directly its limbs become rigid, places its four feet upon one of his hands, and skips and twirls round the altar. After some minutes of these manœuvres, he lays the victim upon the stone. Thereupon those present rush at him, knock him down, tie his hands behind his back, force him to join the dance. Every one does his part shouting. The musicians beat the drums with all their might. The djanni is as much or more excited than the rest, his eyes roll, his hair

stands on end. His God enters into him; Pot Rad, incarnate in his person, springs upon the stupefied lamb, seizes it in his teeth, shakes it, flies at its throat, bites into it until it expires. Then he stops to take breath, but only that he may burrow into the torn entrails, plunging his head into them several times, and withdrawing it dripping with blood. Now the spectators are satisfied, and taking possession of the lacerated corpse, inter it at the foot of the altar. After this, they call to mind the corn and seed, flesh and bones, and the heads of numerous victims, piled up before Tari. And all, to whatever caste they belong, fling themselves upon the heap, and begin to strive with one another for the remains, each for his field or garden. The demoniac has fled into the jungle, and will not reappear for three days. This is, however, only the last scene but one.

To wind up with, the villagers carry the image of the Goddess, and the head of the bull first immolated, in triumph round their cultivated ground. No order is observed, no decency; the more mad they are, the more joyful and vigorous will be the Earth. There is a cross fire of quips and quirks, of sallies more than unseemly, of obscene gesticulations, of mockeries and railleries. At the Lenæa of Dionysus the vine-dressers were first and foremost; here the herdsmen lead the revels. They insist upon having their say upon the business of the moment. They fling mud at all the world and his father with devilish energy, indict notables and authorities, do not spare even the Goddess. The Asadis, dancing girls and prostitutes connected with the cult, assail the most grave and respectable citizens, mob Brahmins and Lingayats, and spring upon the backs of Zemindars. After the emotions of the immolated meriah, after the sight of butcheries, after tears and shrieks, after so much bloodshed, all stand in need of roars of laughter. The overwrought soul only regains its equilibrium by passing through some agitation of an opposite character. In this fashion the mad band reach the chapel consecrated to the god Terminus, where

they bury the bull's head. On the morrow of the saturnalia no sign of it is to be seen, and each goes about his customary avocation.

CONCLUSION.

Thus, even yesterday, could meriahs be observed upon the spot, living relics of a prehistoric religion. The evolutions through which mankind has passed in time, are repeated in space. In the windings and innermost recesses of the labyrinth formed by mountains and valleys, with divers climates and aspects varied by the action of dry or rainy winds, the intellectual flora of earlier periods is to be found, scattered, but almost complete. Ages outlive themselves, and each is impressed by the others. The tiny dewdrop, the very tiniest, reflects a whole country side; in like manner may our individuality, which yet is so short-lived, be present at the long procession of the ages, and make itself the contemporary of times gone by and days to come; it needs but to see and look into what is round us, it needs but to understand it.

These Khonds, these Todas and Badagas, these Apaches, these Esquimaux, are scorned as being merely infant peoples, are despised as possessing merely the rudiments of intelligence and morality. But it is just because of their childish intelligence, their rudimentary morality, that they ought to excite interest. Great men, those who are wise and advanced, represent only their own personality; superior individuals cannot teach us so much as the weaker and humbler, who show us humanity at its outset. Naturalists attach at least as much significance to the infinitely small as to the infinitely great; infusoria, mucus, ferments, moulds, attract their thought as much as solar systems, the trajectories of comets, constellated vortices. Neither is there anything too mean for the moralist; for the wretchedest of

men is still his brother, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. In our species there is nothing grand, there is nothing base, in which we are not conjointly concerned. Have we not been told how Newton saw an apple fall, and asked himself, Why? Thinking upon it, he beheld the confused multitude of stars shaken from their places; from all sides they inclined towards the milky way, and therein were swallowed up, decomposed, composed once more. Two words flamed forth upon the dark depths in the immensity of space: *Universal Gravitation.*

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